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THE  
LIFE AND WORKS  
OF  
ROBERT SCHUMANN

BY  
AUGUST REISSMANN

TRANSLATED BY  
ABBY LANGDON ALGER



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## PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

THE mere outward details of the life of our great master would scarcely afford sufficient matter for a prolonged account. Up to the time of that terrible event which, with fearful violence, tore him in full maturity from his family and his work, there were but few striking incidents in his life, and even these seem chiefly noteworthy from motives of affectionate regard and reverence. There are still no small number of people who have a higher and more exclusive right to his life, than the nation. To his country belongs what he achieved and created, such art treasures as he left behind in perpetual legacy; his life, on the contrary, is hers only in so far as it is revealed in these.

Such are the considerations that have guided me in my work. I have striven to explain the master's mental development as it is seen in his works, and also to show his great significance in the world of art and letters. The external course of his life will be mentioned only as it affected that mental development, and as it renders his art work more intelligible. For this subordinate part of my task I have chiefly relied upon Wasielewski's careful "Life and Letters of Schumann."

A more exhaustive statement of Schumann's artistic progress and importance, particularly as an innovating



genius, is now attempted for the first time. Valuable as such an attempt must be in view of the great number of works of varying merit in which his genius is revealed, it is by no means always an easy task to classify them correctly. But I have at least steadily striven to avoid that phraseology which merely gives sonorous sentences without the true essence. May my little book help to make the master's mind plain to the most remote circles, and may it ever work with ardent and regenerative power to reorganize art in our age !

THE AUTHOR.

BERLIN, *April*, 1865.

## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

**O**N printing a new edition, I see no occasion for any essential changes. I have merely corrected some slight errors and inaccuracies, and added new facts.

THE AUTHOR.

BERLIN, *May*, 1871.

## PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

THE improvements found in this edition relate merely to the history of the master's life and works, the story of his artistic progress and significance remains unchanged.

THE AUTHOR.

FRIEDENAU, *September*, 1878.

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THE LIFE AND WORKS  
OF  
ROBERT SCHUMANN.

CHAPTER I.

PATERNAL HOME. LEIPSIC AND HEIDELBERG.

ILL as Robert Schumann's education and the entire surroundings of his paternal home may have been adapted to bring his slumbering genius to early and glorious bloom, yet both played an important part in giving his spirit that peculiar bent by which his high artistic and literary fame was almost exclusively gained. Schumann's individuality was far too personal to require any special training. External stimulus and time for mental work were its most important agents, and as it bore wondrous flower and fruit in years of luxuriant growth under the fructifying influence of Shakespeare, Jean Paul Richter, Hoffmann, Heinrich Heine, Franz Schubert, Chopin, and Mendelssohn, so even then and there in the paternal home it sought and found the soil in which it might strike root for rich productive growth.

His father, Friedrich August Gottlob Schumann, was one of those happy, highly gifted natures, which shape themselves successfully to whatever untoward fate may lead them to. He worked his way up from most modest circumstances to an honourable position by his own efforts, and although he was able to do but little to promote the specific mental tendency of his son Robert, he introduced into the boy's life that element which afterwards formed so important a part of it.

Wholly contrary to his own desire, he was obliged to adopt the mercantile calling; but work in a grocer's shop could not kill his love of polite literature. The writings of Milton and Young particularly attracted him, and when he came to Leipsic later in life, he inscribed himself upon the list of students at the university. His studies ended, he began his literary labours, which had no success save as they led to his being made assistant to Heinse, a bookseller of Zeitz. This position insured him not only a living, but many means for farther culture, which he must have used most assiduously, for when he wished to marry in 1795, and was therefore led to open a grocery shop, he was able to earn the necessary sum of some thousand thalers by literary work. After the lapse of four years he gave up the business, which had been carried on in conjunction with a merchant of Ronneburg, and established himself in the book trade. By untiring energy, he managed so to increase this business, that he was forced to move to a larger town. In 1808 he went to Zwickau, where, with one of his brothers, he established the well-known firm of "Schumann Brothers," publishers, which was continued until 1840, and won good repute by the publication of many valuable works. Our Robert, as a boy of fourteen, worked on the text of the "Gallery of Celebrated Men of the Time."

Thus we see the father always occupied in building up the happiness of his family upon a firm foundation, and at the same time aiding the progress of his age in the noblest way. He not only strove to inculcate a spirit of order and well regulated industry, but he also carefully respected the higher tastes of his children, as is especially shown in the case of his son Robert.

The latter was born at Zwickau on the 8th of June, 1810, at 10.30 in the evening. Being the youngest child, he seems to have been the favourite both of his parents and of his brothers and sisters—particularly of his mother. She, a daughter of the town physician of Zeitz, Dr. Schnabel, is described as a woman of agreeable appearance, natural good sense, and a depth of feeling which in later life took the form of romantic sentimentality. Her whole character, her ardent love for her son, as well as her practical good sense, are unreservedly displayed in a letter written from Zwickau (August 7th, 1830) to Wieck, in which she asks “tremblingly and with inward fear,” how “he likes Robert’s plan” (to give up law for music). It is no mere prejudice which makes her “shudder for Robert’s future—many things are requisite to attain distinction in that art,” and the anxious mother’s heart already feels all the black shadows destined to darken her son’s soul if he persevere; “and even were his talent really marked, it is and must remain uncertain whether he will win applause and enjoy an assured future.” But, anxious as she is, and loudly as the three elder sons protest against their brother’s wish, she “cannot consent to force him to do that which is repugnant to his own feelings.” How sensible and how full of the tenderest love is the close of the letter.<sup>1</sup> “I know that you

<sup>1</sup> Given entire in Wasielewski’s “Life of Schumann.” Wherever reference is made to this life, the American translation, published by Oliver Ditson, Boston, Mass., has been used.



love music—do not let that feeling plead for Robert, but consider his age, his means, his strength and his future. I beg, I implore you, as a husband, a father, and the friend of my son, act like an honest man ! and give me your plain, frank opinion, let me know what he has to fear or to hope.”

As in most cases, Robert's youthful years belonged almost wholly to his mother, and under her influence chiefly was developed that pure fervour of feeling particularly demanded by his high artistic position, to which his whole life bore witness ; this, however, soon estranged him from the busy world, and was the prime factor in producing that profound melancholy which often overcame him “almost to suicide.”

But from his father he seems to have inherited that energy of soul which struggles to attain the appointed end despite the most opposing obstacles. And Robert Schumann required this energy even more than his father did. The artistic career afforded him more thorns than roses ; far more frequent disappointment than realization of his hopes, and that siren, “popular favour,” which has lured many a genius over the fatal precipice, hovered before him also, more seductive to him than to many another, so that he needed all his moral courage to escape her toils and avoid the rocks.

Robert enjoyed his first educational advantages in his sixth year, at a common school ; he probably began to take music lessons in his seventh year. His piano teacher, Kuntsch, was perhaps better than is usually the case in small towns. Although Schumann afterwards showed great respect for this instructor, sending him a silver laurel wreath, with a cordial letter, from Godesberg, near Bonn, on the occasion of his jubilee in 1850, yet we may safely assume that he had no noteworthy influence in the

development of our master. This was, as already said, scarcely a thing to be educated, and as will be shown later, was far more largely conditional upon other influences than upon mere music lessons.

It is much more important for us to know how early the boy's creative impulse sprang to life. He had scarcely conquered the elements of piano "*technique*," when he tried his hand at little *fantasias*, and the simplicity and honesty with which he contrived to give a musical picture of the peculiar traits of many of his young contemporaries excited their great admiration.

Thus, even then, music seemed to the boy a language, the art by which mental ideas might gain outward visible form, and all his future artistic efforts were governed exclusively by this conviction. It guided his otherwise rather planless and aimless studies, and prevented him from ever regarding music as a mere amusement; it forbade his being led away by the mere love of creation, and caused him always to work under the influence of strong and plastic ideas. But here too we find the origin of a natural shrinking from theoretical studies, and we shall try later on to show the influence which this again exercised upon Schumann's development.

The father favoured his son's love of music, and although, as we have already said, he was in no position to give it any special training or to lead the boy in the beaten path, he took all adequate pains to nourish and promote it. He was often present with his son Julius, and the school-mates of the boys, at the performance of the "robber comedies," written by Robert. Later on, musical exercises seem to have gained the ascendancy in Schumann's home; and after Robert had heard Ignaz Moscheles, the renowned pianist, at Carlsbad, where he went with his father, he turned to music with the strongest predilection.



“When, more than thirty years ago,” he writes, November 20th, 1851, to Moscheles, “I treasured as a sacred relic a concert programme which you had touched, I little dreamed that I should ever be honoured in such fashion by so illustrious a master.”<sup>1</sup>

After he entered the fourth class of the grammar school in his native town (Easter, 1820, in his tenth year) his devotion to music became somewhat more methodical. He found a fellow-pupil in the son of the leader of a regimental band—named Piltzing—and with him he eagerly played not only the piano compositions of Carl Maria von Weber, Hummel, and Czerny, but also the great instrumental works of Haydn, Mozart, and later of Beethoven, all arranged for four hands, a new Streicher piano being brought from Vienna for the use of the two friends. When Robert found the orchestral score of Rhigini’s overture to “Tigranes” among his father’s music, its performance was made possible by the formation of a little orchestra. Violins, flutes, clarionets, and horn were played by his schoolfellows; the other parts Robert executed on the piano, and, as this first attempt succeeded far beyond their hopes, it was soon repeated, and followed by a series of similar performances. These inspired Schumann’s first effort at composition. In his twelfth or thirteenth year he set the 150th psalm to music, to be rendered by this amateur orchestra, and various overtures and operatic sketches also date from this epoch.

His great gifts soon found admiring acknowledgment at home. In those families who loved music he was, of course, a welcome guest; and the evening entertainments at the grammar school found in him an active promoter.

His father presently recognized his son’s true calling,

<sup>1</sup> Moscheles dedicated his Sonata (Opus 121), for piano and violoncello, to him.

and although the mother struggled against it, he resolved to educate the boy for a musician. Carl Maria von Weber, who had lived in Dresden since 1819, as director of an orchestra, was chosen for his master. We cannot say why this plan was never carried out, although von Weber agreed to it, the correspondence relative to the subject being apparently lost. Robert remained in the house of his parents, and no change was made in his course of study. His father even declared it to be his firm intention that Robert should follow the legal profession.

Nevertheless music was by no means neglected; it still remained his favourite pursuit in leisure hours. The death of his father on the 10th of August, 1826, caused no important alteration in Robert's life. His bright young spirit had already begun to yield to a more sombre melancholy; and that silence and reserve, which afterwards made personal intercourse with him so difficult, now showed their first traces. It was only in musical communion that he expressed himself freely, and he considered a love of music and of our great poets—particularly Shakespeare and Jean Paul—an essential condition of friendship. In society, only those houses attracted him where "good music" might be heard. The house of the merchant Carus is often mentioned as one which he visited often and gladly, especially in the summer of 1827, when a skilled amateur, the wife of Dr. Carus, who was afterwards professor at the universities of Leipsic and Dorpat, resided there.

This young woman made an unusual impression upon him by her singing, and inspired him to write a series of songs.

Unmistakable as his true vocation was to all, and great as was the success he had already achieved by his rich musical gifts, he could not yet gain his mother's consent to his pursuance of the artistic career. She was upheld in her

opposition by his guardian, a merchant named Rudel, so that he found himself forced to enter college at the end of his grammar school career.

In March, 1828, being then in his eighteenth year, he went to Leipsic, and was there entered at the university; returning immediately afterwards to his native town, as the examination was still to be passed. We see by the excellent certificates which he received on leaving school that he had by no means neglected his scientific musical studies up to this time.

A journey to Munich, undertaken after passing his examination, affords certain not extraordinary, but still interesting incidents, which may help to perfect our portrait of the youth. He had made a sudden, but sincere and, as we shall see, a lasting bond of friendship with the law student, Gisbert Rosen, at Leipsic. The latter, about to move to Heidelberg, accepted Schumann's invitation to visit him, and lingered until the college examination was over. When he set out for Heidelberg, Schumann accompanied him as far as Munich. The two spent a day in Baireuth, to visit the places made memorable by Jean Paul—the Fantasy, the Hermitage, and the house of Rollwenzel—and to learn further details of the poet himself from the lips of his friend.

Jean Paul having died but two years before (November 14, 1825), his memory was still fresh in the minds of his immediate neighbours. And if here Schumann entered into closer communion with the spirit only of the poet so nearly allied to him, he was destined to meet in Munich that greatest lyric writer of the period immediately after Goethe, Heinrich Heine, by whose genius the richest and fairest side of his nature was in later years inspired to a luxuriant outburst of song.

Heine was at this time living in Munich; and our two



friends, bringing introductions from Augsburg, spent a few highly enjoyable hours with the poet.

The two young men were hospitably received in Augsburg, at the house of the well-known chemist, Dr. von Kurrer, whose wife was a native of Zwickau, and Schumann at once conceived an ardent affection for his host's attractive daughter. Although his love was not returned, Clara being already betrothed, she is often mentioned for months afterwards in the correspondence with Rosen.

In Munich the friends parted; Rosen went to Heidelberg, Schumann returned to his mother's house, and thence went to Leipsic.

Finally, let us mention that at this time he gave proof of a gift for versifying. Wasielewski quotes two poems which he wrote on the occasion of his brother's wedding, in his biography of Schumann.

On glancing at this portion of his life once more, we recognize the fact that it was only inwardly, and not at all outwardly, influential in regard to his true vocation. His education aimed at other objects than those which afterwards became the purpose of his life. Therefore his scientific studies only were systematically conducted. His true life element, music, although the constant companion of this period, was not yet subjected to any regular training. Much music as he played, no real knowledge or understanding of the art was yet revealed to him. Only that which chance or some special necessity brought before him became the subject of his study; nor did this study refer to any but that side of the composition which was clear to him without instruction or special knowledge. At this period he simply allowed the monumental beauty of the masterpiece to affect him, without gaining that perception of the cause of this effect, which is indispensable to the student of art, through a just appreciation of the

nature of the materials employed. He therefore early acknowledged music as "*expressive*," but not as "*formative*." It seemed to him a language revealing the most marvellous secrets, but not yet as a plastic art displayed in melodious tone-forms. Hard as he might struggle to appropriate the organism of that language, he did not always attain complete clearness in its use, because he strove far too prematurely to adapt it to his individual mind. That mind was even at this time so fertile, that it required but a few years of careful nurture to produce an abundant harvest of wonderful and classic masterpieces.

Schumann was not expressly trained for a musician in the home of his childhood, but that sacred spring whence his songs flowed originated there, and all the glorious tints and hues in which his fancy gleams and glitters may be referred back to the same source. His own deep sense of this fact is proved by his love of returning to the world of childhood, whence come some of his best works. As we shall hereafter show, they are his thank-offering to that time of unconscious receptivity; to the spirit of his father, which rested upon him; to the heart of his mother, which encircled him with ardent love; and to the years of simple enjoyment and creation.

The spirit of Jean Paul, as seen by the boy and the youth, is here revealed in very different guise from that it wore to the mature man in after years.

To a personality so strangely developed the student life of Leipsic, upon which he now entered, offered very little attraction; he at first held quite aloof from it.

"Alas!" he writes to Rosen, June 5, 1828, "what an ideal picture of a student I had formed, and what paltry fellows I found the most of them." Nor, as the letter goes on to state, did he find life in Leipsic very agreeable, until he encountered a circle of like-minded souls, who not only



endured, but eagerly demanded, "flights with Jean Paul, or on the piano." He did, indeed, join a society of students soon after his arrival in Leipsic, to which his friend, Moritz Semmel, a relative of his family (afterwards counsellor of justice at Gera), also belonged; but for the reasons already hinted, both soon withdrew from it, and entered the "Marcomannia." But even this afforded little more than occasional participation in some drinking bout or practice in the fencing school.

The study of law, to which his mother and his guardian desired him to devote his life, roused still less interest in his soul. He, however, assured his guardian, in a letter dated July 4, 1828, that he had certainly chosen the law as the profession for which he would study, that he would "work steadily, cold and dry as the beginning might be;" but he never got beyond this beginning. From this conflict between duty and inclination, and the sharp contrast of his ideal with the world of reality, whose bitterness he felt with increasing force, those gloomy views of life were developed, which in him were neither youthful coquetry nor disenchantment, and which hung like a thick veil over his works as well as his life, but which urged him on with ever stronger violence towards music, the art in which alone he could recover his ideal, pure and undisturbed.

He was on social terms with but few of the companions of his studies, nor were they in any position to make his life in Leipsic more endurable; he found, as he wrote to his friend Rosen, "no roses in life, and no Rose among men." He neither attended the lectures nor allied himself with mankind; he rather avoided his fellow-creatures, and was broken-hearted at the pettiness and wretchedness of this selfish world. To him the world of man was only "a huge graveyard of buried dreams, a garden of cypresses and weeping willows, a silent peep-show, with weeping

puppets." Music alone seemed to shed light and joy into his soul at this time.

A new musical life soon dawned for him in the house of that art-loving woman Agnes Carus, to whom, as we have said, he already owed much musical enjoyment, and whose husband had meantime been called to a professorship at Leipsic. Here, too, he made an acquaintance, which was destined to be most fruitful in results for his whole life, that of the eminent teacher of the piano, Friedrich Wieck, who, born at Pretsch, near Wittemberg, August 18th, 1785, like Schumann did not enter upon the artistic career until his first youth had passed. When he entered the University of Wittemberg in 1803 to study theology, he found opportunity to practise music, but only as a subordinate employment. After acting for some years as private tutor, he established a music and piano warehouse, and gave piano lessons according to Logier's method, which he gradually altered to suit himself.

At Easter, 1840, he removed to Dresden, where he did good work for many years. During the last years of his life, he spent the summer months at Loschnitz, near Dresden, where he died October 6th, 1873. Public proof of the excellence of his method has been given by two particularly of his scholars, his daughters Clara and Marie. Clara, who is of the utmost interest to us, as she became the careful loving wife of Schumann, has won world-wide renown, both for her astounding execution and her inspired interpretation of the great composers.

Clara Josephine Wieck, born in Leipsic, September 13th, 1819, was early trained to art by her father. When scarcely nine years old, she appeared in public, and made her first concert tour in her eleventh year, constantly labouring meantime to attain broad and comprehensive musical culture, in which most virtuosi are sadly lacking.

She even practised the violin for some time, and also studied singing<sup>1</sup> under the famous teacher Mieksch, of Dresden, now dead. Her succeeding concert tours were made highly significant by the fact that, at a time when mere execution had begun to take possession of all musical development, she never allowed herself to be dazzled by its seductive shimmer. She never made a mere show of her proficiency, but consecrated it to the service of true art alone. It required much courage in that day, when only phenomenal playing, bristling with self-imposed, apparently unconquerable difficulties, won gold and honour, to hold high the banner of genuine and holy art, and herein Clara Wieck proved herself the true helpmate of the great master who dedicated his life to the same end. Clara Wieck worked as zealously in her way as Robert Schumann did by his writings, his words, and his own works, to dignify and diffuse true art. Together with the masterpieces of the so-called classic period, the compositions of one of the most gifted young musicians of modern times, Frederic Chopin, gained a wide repute through her; and when Schumann created his characteristic works of art, which have their

<sup>1</sup> Gottfried Weber writes, in vol. xiv. of the "Cecilia" (1832), p. 223, in commenting on a criticism of Chopin's Op. 1 by Friedrich Wieck:—"At a recent court concert, the fourteen year old daughter of the author of the above review, performed the composition in question with general applause. Now-a-days, indeed, wonderful children have ceased to be wonders. 'What won't people make for money!' cried a peasant who visited town and saw a humming bird for the first time.—'What won't people make for money!' I too would fain exclaim when I see so many five and six year old performers. But the little player, Clara Wieck, won from me approval far greater and more sincere than was due to her really remarkable playing only, for she extemporized a long fantasy upon a theme of a bar and a half in length which I gave her at the moment, and this she did with a skill and a wealth of ideas which would have done credit to a finished artist."



own significance for all time, she was their most ardent herald and also their most talented interpreter.

The deep importance of Schumann's first meeting with the Wieck family can, of course, be but approximately estimated. Clara, although still a child, had reached a high degree of artistic excellence, and it was therefore natural that young Schumann should be moved to test for himself the merits of a method which had produced such results. He took lessons of Wieck, and gave himself up with the utmost fervour to those purely technical studies which he had hitherto neglected.

He still avoided the exercises in thorough bass, which Wieck sensibly combined with his piano teaching, being unable to appreciate their necessity. This again is a characteristic token of the peculiar nature of his individuality, which was not to be trained by rule. Later on we shall try to show, how, in spite of all this, he appropriated and assimilated every means of revealing his superabundant mental store in consummate tone-forms.

In February, 1829, Wieck was forced to dismiss his pupil for lack of time. Whatever Schumann may have owed to his instructions in technical respects, the advantages derived for his development as a creative artist from the stimulating society of the Wieck family, far outweighed all others. His zeal for art grew ever greater, and all who failed to share that zeal, seemed naturally removed from the narrow circle of his acquaintance. So we soon find him in almost exclusive association with Julius Knorr, once the most popular piano-teacher of Leipsic, now, alas! dead, the author of several excellent musical text-books, and an active co-worker on Schumann's journal; with Täglichsbeck, then grammar school-teacher and musical director at Brandenburg, in which offices he died in 1858; and with Glock, afterwards burgomaster at Ostheim near Meiningen.

With them he studied not only the older, but also the more modern literature of music. Franz Schubert gradually gained admission to this musical circle with his wonderfully pathetic strains, and in him as well as in Jean Paul, Schumann found a kindred spirit, the musician's works soon holding him captive with the self-same power as was exerted by the poems of Jean Paul. Schubert's songs were studied with no less care than his piano compositions for two and four hands. His trio in the key of B flat (Op. 99) was practised with Täglichsbeck, who played the violin, and Glock, who played the 'cello, and was finally performed before a number of gentlemen, at an evening entertainment arranged by Schumann.

Thenceforth the friends met regularly on fixed days at Schumann's rooms, to play chamber music by various composers. To Schumann these meetings were of inestimable value. The whole inner organism of the work of art, which his mind refused to grasp theoretically, dawned upon him spiritually, as it were, upon actual performance, so that he instinctively grasped and utilized it.

We find a similar cause of development in the case of Franz Schubert, the master to whom Schumann is nearest of kin. The practical exercises in which he took an actual part both before and during his residence at the university, and in his paternal home, were also of incomparably greater value to Schubert than the teachings of his masters Ruziczka and Salieri. But in Schumann's case this assimilation was far more a conscious act than in Schubert's. The friends not only played together, but they also strove to gain a deeper comprehension of the music by a mutual interchange of their ideas in regard to art and art works. Mere "music making," as we have already remarked, had little charm for Schumann.

Of his own compositions written at this time, we may

mention eight polonaises for four hands, a number of songs, and a quartet for piano and stringed instruments, probably all directly inspired and influenced by Schubert. The songs he sent to Wiedebein, the Brunswick song-writer, famous in his day. This fact itself is more interesting than the judgment which the latter pronounced in regard to Schumann and his songs,<sup>1</sup> because it affords us a clue to the peculiar side of music which alone irresistibly attracted Schumann at that time. If we consider Wiedebein's songs impartially, it is not easy now to recognize that quality which could impress a student of art inspired by Franz Schubert and Jean Paul.

The songs which we have examined are not far removed from the utmost commonplace, either in their actual construction or their special contents. The point in which they surpass a thousand other specimens of the kind is a certain nobility of sensuous and fascinating melodic form. This was an essential feature of the school which found one of its chief champions in Schumann. If, therefore, our art student was moved by no external reason to submit his efforts to the judgment of the older and more experienced song-writer, we have strong proof that at this time it was only the charm of the melody which moved him, in which he revelled, and which best corresponded to the splendid tints of the Jean Paul world.

It is not amazing that Schumann did not get beyond the icy cold, dry beginning of the study of law, with this mental tendency. The legal lectures were paid for, but not attended, while he was a tolerably regular attendant at the lectures of the philosopher Krug. Still more surprising

<sup>1</sup> "Your songs have many faults, some of them very many; but I should call them natural and youthful errors rather than intellectual ones. You are highly endowed by nature; profit by your gifts, and the respect of the world will not be denied you."



to say, he also studied the writings of Fichte and Kant; certainly a rarity with a dreamer like him. His relations with Schelling must surely have been more intimate than with either of these. His removal to Heidelberg brought about no marked change in the progress of his development. Even the brilliant Thibaut failed to rouse him to any higher interest in law, and although he occasionally attended his lectures, this was chiefly due to the personal relations soon established between himself and the cultivated and very learned musical enthusiast. He worked at his music with more ardour than ever. Even on the excursions which he took with his friends Rosen and Semmel, he never forgot to practise his finger exercises in the carriage on a "dumb piano."

A journey to Italy projected by his comrades, led him to study Italian; he speedily made such marked progress, that he succeeded in translating several of Petrarch's sonnets in the same metre and with great fidelity to the spirit of the original. His friends were prevented from making the trip, and Schumann set off alone early in September. Three letters written to Rosen and his sister Theresa, and published by Wasielewski, give a brief account of his adventures. Amidst the glorious scenery which filled him with rapture, and which lessened the assurance even of the haughty student, he was again overcome by the deepest melancholy, and in the letter to Rosen above referred to (October 4, 1829, Milan), he makes an extremely characteristic confession in regard to himself:—

"For several weeks (or rather always) I have seemed to myself entirely poor and entirely rich, utterly feeble and utterly strong, decrepit and yet full of life"—a state which afterwards inspired those two mystical figures, Florestan and Eusebius. After his return, during the entire winter (1829-30) he devoted himself to music with increased

vigour. His by no means insignificant skill as a pianist, as well as the peculiar style of his execution, made him a welcome guest in the musical circles of Heidelberg. But even the success achieved by a public appearance at this date did not lead him to take a more lively interest in the public musical life of Heidelberg. Nor did Thibaut's house, at which the older forms of vocal religious music were largely studied, attract him long. Thibaut's views, as well as the works upon which they were based, were quite foreign to Schumann, and he never drew any nearer to them.

He devoted himself more closely than ever to composition, and created some few things which he considered worthy of publicity even in his maturer years, such as numbers 1, 3, 4, 6, and 8 in Opus 2, which were written in 1828, together with several pianoforte studies. At the same time he began various larger works, which, however, remained unfinished for very natural reasons.

It will, undoubtedly, be wiser to consider these first efforts, in so far as they have become known, in connection with the other works belonging to the earlier period of his development; we shall, therefore, continue the sketch of our master's life up to the point where he gave up a course foreign to his nature and followed the artistic career exclusively.

Easter, 1830, ended the year devoted to his studies at Heidelberg; he was about to return home, and yet had reached no decision. It was impossible for him to conquer his aversion for the study of law, and yet respect for his mother restrained him from openly declaring it and applying himself wholly to his beloved art. In this conflict, he begged leave to prolong his stay at Heidelberg, which was granted by his mother and his guardian, without making any material change in his situation. As heretofore, he lived



almost solely for his art. His love for it received fresh food from the appearance of Paganini. Schumann hastened to Frankfort with his friend Töpke, to hear this great artist who enchanted all ears by his wonderful violin playing at Easter, 1830. Schumann's pianoforte arrangement of this master's studies (Op. 3 and 10) shows us how powerfully he was impressed by what he heard. The appearance of this virtuoso, who was enthusiastically admired in his day, undoubtedly contributed largely to bring about Schumann's final decision to devote himself wholly to an artistic career. He wrote to his mother, July 30, 1830, that his entire life had been "but a twenty years' strife between poetry and prose—or music and law—and it must now cease."

With the most persuasive eloquence he set forth his own wishes, but still left the decision entirely in his mother's hands. "If I stick to law," he wrote, "I must assuredly spend another winter in Heidelberg to hear Thibaut on the pandects, lectures which every lawyer should hear," and in conclusion: "The question must be settled by Michaelmas at the latest, and then I will work towards the appointed end vigorously and without tears. You see that this is the most important letter which I have ever written or ever shall write, and so you must not fulfil my request reluctantly, but answer me speedily."

We already know how the mother yielded with fear and trembling to her son's desire, leaving the final decision to the experienced teacher, Friedrich Wieck. Wieck, who was thoroughly familiar with Schumann's great gifts, decided in his favour, and the mother made no further opposition.

After his money matters, which at this time he was little able to arrange, had been settled, he returned to Leipzig, to devote himself wholly to art.

True to the tendency of his time, he intended to pursue the career of a virtuoso. At this period it does not seem to have been very clear to him that an artist needed any other preparation than that which was within his reach. In the era when mere executive power was worshipped, virtuoso and artist were identical terms; only the virtuoso was an artist.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE DECISION AND PREPARATION FOR AN ARTISTIC CAREER.

SCHUMANN'S practice of music up to this time had been but ill adapted to prepare him for an artistic career, but still it sufficed to promote the peculiar evolution of his individuality. This would doubtless have attained formal and complete development earlier if his studies had been more systematic, though it might have been at the expense of its captivating directness and diversity. The fact that Schumann composed only when inwardly impelled to do so is the most essential feature of his musical nature. A more mechanical pursuit of music, without which no regular study is conceivable, was utterly repugnant to him; but such was the strength of his individuality that he mastered an adequate form for his musical conceptions by *instinct* rather than by hard study, and gave to the beauty of his ideas, for the most part, a corresponding concrete perfection. Schumann's very earliest industry was more fruitful in spiritual results than in mere manual dexterity.

At the same time, his individuality even then struggled for expression in those works of this period which are to come under our consideration later on. In harmony with this peculiar process of development, his individuality is far more strongly marked in his early works than is usually the case with first efforts.

In the oldest works of the great masters, from Bach to

Schumann, we meet with so much which is not really original, but borrowed from "the schools," that it is not always easy to recognize a characteristic trait. Their individuality in all its grandeur first appears in their later works, and only in proportion as they succeed in stripping off what is foreign to them, and in subduing "the lessons of the schools" to their service. With Schumann the case is just reversed. His individuality appeared in all its directness in his earlier works, and only gained greater clearness and intelligibility as he assimilated the methods of the schools. With other masters technics gradually retire into the background, while with Schumann they constantly acquire greater power, so that the true individuality is finally almost lost under their sway.

In the autumn of 1830 Schumann returned to Leipsic, and put himself under the tuition of Wieck, finding lodging in his master's house, and giving himself up with the utmost ardour to those studies which form the foundation of technical skill. This, too, is a characteristic sign of his personality, and of his peculiar views of art at this time. He neglected the preparatory technical studies for composition, while he undertook the incomparably more tedious and deadening studies for piano playing, in the shape of "finger exercises," with such energy and persistence that he brought on a lameness of one finger of his right hand. He could not yet appreciate the necessity of thorough bass. Schubert and Beethoven gave him the requisite instruction for the melodious expression of the feeling which now animated him.

Not until that event occurred which prevented his farther prosecution of the career of a virtuoso—when his right hand was entirely lamed in the autumn of 1831—did he feel the necessity of special study into the peculiar nature of the musical means of representation.



Heinrich Dorn, leader of the orchestra at the Royal Opera House in Berlin from 1849 to 1869, at this time musical director in Leipsic, an experienced musician both in simple and elaborate forms of musical composition, undertook the direction of these new studies. According to the fashion of the time they were chiefly studies in thorough bass. At first given melodies were simply harmonized, the harmonies built up upon figured bass, and a more independent counterpoint made to stationary melodies—*cantus firmus*. Finally, even the forms of more elaborated counterpoint were not excepted, although at this period they were already beginning to fall gradually into disrepute.

This course of instruction was thoroughly advantageous to Schumann; it gave him opportunity to recognize the innermost essence of the especially harmonic means of representation, from which he composed his most marvellous pictures, while at the same time it neither narrowed nor contracted his individuality.

But even now the schools taught him nothing which he was forced to cast aside in after years. From various letters to Dorn, we see how greatly indebted he felt to that master for his special tuition. "I think of you almost daily," he says in one note, dated September 14, 1836; "often sadly, because I learned far too irregularly; always gratefully, since, in spite of this, I learned far more than you think." When we come to consider those of Schumann's compositions which were written at this time, we shall recur to the peculiar influence of this instruction.

But still deeper and more lasting in its effect on his individual development was the musical life of Leipsic, which seems even then to have been extremely well ordered. We must once more affirm that intercourse with musical people appealed to him far more, and with greater success, than dry lessons in thorough bass and counterpoint.

Leipsic afforded him such intercourse far more freely than almost any other city could do at this period.

The increasing importance won by Leipsic as a commercial centre necessarily entailed a higher form of public art life. Leipsic, to be sure, never supported a luxuriantly endowed Italian opera, as did most courts of the last century; but the city had been actively employed, since the storms of the Thirty Years' War subsided, in founding and maintaining institutions which not only brought art and life into closer relations, but helped to nurture art to richer growth and bloom.

The privileges of the Choral Society connected with the Thomas School were gradually increasing, and it soon became one of the most famous and important societies in Germany. For almost two hundred years the direction of it rested in the hands of the greatest masters of German art. Among them may be mentioned Seth Calvisius, who from 1594 to 1613 filled the office of Cantor at the Thomas School; Johann Herrman Schein, from 1617 to 1630; Johann Kuhnau, from 1701 to 1722, who in 1720 arranged church music in the style in which it now exists; but more especially Johann Sebastian Bach, who acted as Cantor at the Thomas School in Leipsic from 1723 to 1750.

Every Saturday afternoon, down to the present day, the Thomas Chorus performs sacred music without instrumental accompaniment, and on Sunday at early mass, accompanied by the city orchestra, in the Thomas Church; and thus, as a matter of course, forms a marked feature of the public musical life of Leipsic.

That other institution, through which the musical life of Leipsic has won the most widespread fame—the Gewandhaus Concerts—was not established until the close of the last century.



In the spring of 1743 subscription concerts were given in Leipzig under the direction of Johann Friedrich Doles, which were, however, frequently interrupted by the miseries of the Silesian and Seven Years' Wars, more particularly the latter. Under J. A. Hiller, who resumed them at the close of this war (1763), they gained fresh force, particularly as he continued them at his own risk, under the name of "Amateur Concerts."

In the years 1779 and 1780, Councillor of War and Burgomaster Müller finally authorized the building of a concert and ball room in the Armoury, or "Cloth House" (Gewandhaus), as it was called; and at the same time that Concert Union was formed which established the Gewandhaus Concerts, soon to become world-renowned. The first concert was given November 25, 1781, under the direction of Hiller. Originally at twenty-four, and afterwards at twenty annual concerts, to which were added two benefit concerts and eight evening entertainments for chamber music, the most notable instrumental music was excellently given, vocal and instrumental solo talent being also eagerly engaged.

At the beginning of the thirtieth season, the works of Beethoven, as well as the symphonies and other important instrumental compositions of Haydn and Mozart, were the main reliance of the programmes of these concerts; even the ninth symphony of the first-named master, which made its way with much difficulty, was played several times, although it failed to win universal applause. An alliance with the Academy of Singing, which had been in existence for a number of years, and with the Thomas Choral Society, also made it possible to give the oratorios and masses of the above-mentioned masters. At that time, too, the works of contemporary artists found far greater favour than now. Besides Cherubini, Spohr, Schneider, Moscheles, Kalliwoda,

Onslow, Marschner, and Kuhlau, we find upon the programmes a long list of names, forgotten years ago.

Of solo efforts, singing was much preferred, as is still the case. Usually one, but sometimes two, of the most distinguished women singers were engaged for the entire season. But performances on the various orchestral instruments were yet more frequent than to-day. Violin and piano have now won decided predominance. At that time there were soloists on flute, bassoon, double-bass, and even on the kettledrum, and this must, of course, have exerted the most beneficial influence upon the technical development of the orchestra. It is certain that the Leipsic orchestra in this way produced at certain times a list of performers scarcely to be matched.

Together with this institution, most admirable in its way, others arose in the course of time, which, if not so famous, still took an acknowledged and active part in promoting the popular love of music, such for instance as the orchestral union "The Euterpe," established in 1824, or the musical union for sacred and secular music; but most particularly Director Matthei's quartet academy.

Finally, to perfect our picture of the musical life of Leipsic at the time Schumann entered into it, we must also allude to the theatre, which if not brilliant, was yet no disturbing or disfiguring element. The social leaders of Leipsic have always held it in less esteem than those institutions which they could regard as their own creation. Küstner, the meritorious manager of the Royal Court Theatre, who had charge of the Leipsic Theatre from 1817 to 1828, could only maintain it on a scale worthy of the city by great personal efforts, and even when it was carried on as a branch of the Dresden Court Theatre for several years by Remie, the business manager of the latter house, and was again made a municipal theatre under

Ringelhardt in 1832, it failed to find the favour which might have raised it to an artistic height in harmony with the musical associations to which we have referred. As is generally the case, greater concessions to the taste of the majority were requisite than with those more independent institutions. Yet even here the nobler tendency prevailed. Mozart's operas, and Beethoven's "Fidelio," Marschner's "Templar and the Jewess," Spohr's "Jessonda," and similar works, gained firmer footing with the public from the year 1830. At the time of the annual fair too, the only Italian opera troupe existing in Germany, from the Royal Saxon Opera House at Dresden, visited Leipsic and performed under the direction of Morlacchi. Besides the operas of Rossini and Bellini, their repertory contained Mozart's "Don Juan" and "The Marriage of Figaro."

Thus, at the very time that Schumann entered the public musical life of Leipsic, every kind of music was performed there with some degree of excellence. From the solo performance to that of the orchestra or chorus, almost every form and style was represented. So aspiring and thoughtful a student of art as Schumann, found himself every year taking a larger part in the general artistic development; and this active, living, musical intercourse contributed far more than the instruction in thorough bass to lead him from his merely sensuous love of music to a full recognition of the goal towards which he afterwards worked with such energy. He felt himself ever more quickened by those wondrous tones with which he was surrounded, and which at first but faintly stirred by Mozart and Beethoven, rang out in fuller chorus in Schubert, and from which he himself was destined to compose his most marvellous tone-pictures. While his lessons had only shown him his own life-task in the dimmest outlines, the musical



life of Leipzig led him directly up to it. He learned to use the most customary tools; also to discover those methods peculiar to himself, and properly to interpret his own individuality to the comprehension of others. It is possible that he might have achieved greater and more perfect things with a different course of training, but his work could scarcely have been more characteristic and captivating. But his very early critical work proves that the whole course of his development worked chiefly in the specified direction. Naturally he had not yet busied himself with the theoretical foundation of the new school, he was much more absorbed in helping it to do fruitful work; but the necessity of a theoretical basis soon became so clear to him, that after the lapse of a few years he felt himself prompted to establish a musical newspaper. That criticism of Chopin's Op. 2, variations on "La ci darem," which appeared in No. 49 of the Leipzig "Allgemeiner Musikzeitung," Dec. 7, 1831, had already proved the clearness of his prevision in regard to the special direction which he was to pursue.

Thus it does not seem to have disturbed him over much, that the impossibility of his ever becoming a public performer had now become a certainty. He could, and must, henceforth follow a higher, nobler aim with all the greater vigour. The gradually growing security and determination with which he followed it, not only gave a more regular tendency to his studies and his works, but also spread greater contentment and peace over his whole nature. That silent gloom, which formerly often expressed itself in loud complaints, seemed banished by the power of production and of joy at his small successes.

We may mention a prolonged sojourn with his family at Zwickau and Schneeberg in the winter of 1832-33, because it gave him opportunity to hear his newly written

symphonic movement performed by the orchestra of his native town. Such performances, essential as they are to the development of the student of art, are unfortunately rare of attainment, and in Leipsic would have cost Schumann great sacrifices. The one in question was extremely beneficial to him. As we see from a letter to Wieck, he returned to the remodelling of this movement, and the completion of the rest of the work, with renewed pleasure.

Life in Leipsic, whither he returned in March, 1833, also began to suit him better than on first residence in that city. To be sure, he avoided all general social intercourse scarcely less rigorously than before; but on the other hand he was far more intimate with the Wieck family, and with his old and some newly-acquired friends. Owing to the change in the direction of his artistic career, he no longer required Wieck's instructions; he therefore gave up his home with the latter and moved to a house in Reichel's Garden. The favourable situation of this house exercised a beneficent influence upon him, and many an outburst of juvenile mirth brightened the circle of young friends in consequence.

Unfortunately, in the autumn of that year a melancholy event took place, once more clouding the heavens which had but just cleared, and arousing all the old gloomy thoughts in his breast. One of his three sisters-in-law—Rosalie—died, and the news of this event moved him so deeply that that "fearful melancholy" again took possession of him of which he formerly complained, and which now so distressed and oppressed him that he begged his quondam fellow-lodger Gunther, to "come back to him that he might not be entirely helpless and forlorn."

This tremendous excitement was naturally succeeded by an equally great nervous depression, from which, however,



he was soon roused to all the more decisive achievement by a new alliance of friendship. Ludwig Schunke, of Stuttgart, a fine pianist, and like Schumann an ardent adherent of the new school, came to Leipsic in December, 1833, and the two soon became firm friends. Schumann was fired to fresh efforts; a plan was speedily matured to establish a newspaper for the recognition and theoretical foundation of the new ideas, the scheme being carried out in the very next year. Schumann himself gives the best account of the establishment of the "New Journal of Music," in the preface to his collective writings published in 1854, of which a second edition has lately appeared.

"At the close of the year 1833," he says, "a number of musicians, mostly young men, met together every evening in Leipsic, apparently by mere chance and for social intercourse, but no less for an exchange of ideas in regard to the art which was their meat and drink—music. It cannot be said that the musical condition of Germany at that time was very satisfactory. On the stage Rossini still flourished, while Herz and Hüntten held almost exclusive sway on the piano. And yet but a few years had passed since Beethoven, Carl Maria von Weber, and Franz Schubert were in our midst. Mendelssohn's star was indeed in the ascendant, and wonderful things were rumoured of a Pole named Chopin, but the latter excited no lasting influence till later. One day the thought flashed upon the young hot-heads: Let us not stand idly by; let us set to work and strive to improve matters, so that the poetry of Art may once more be held in honour. Thus arose the first pages of a new journal."

As we deem it essential to give special consideration to the significance of Schumann as a critic, and of his journal as well, we will only mention here, that the first number appeared on the 3rd of April, 1834, being published

by the bookseller C. F. H. Hartmann, of Leipsic, who also signed the first volume as the responsible editor, the first number circulating to the extent of several thousand copies. The novel and peculiarly fresh tone which pervaded it, and which was extremely well maintained throughout the first years of its existence, did not fail to produce its due effect. The newspaper not only rapidly gained a list of distinguished contributors, but also a tolerably wide circle of readers. In August, four months after its establishment, Schumann joyfully wrote to his friend Töpke, in Bremen:—"The public support the institution (he means the paper) so warmly that it cannot but delight us. Prague alone takes fifty copies, Dresden thirty, and Hamburg twenty."

Schumann's frequently mentioned inclination, "to accommodate old works of art to modern times, and at the same time to prepare the way for a new poetic age," soon found the most universal recognition, and a number of illustrious men rallied round him for a similar effort. Much of his time and thoughts were now occupied by his editorial labours; these labours were, however, of extraordinary importance to his new creative activity. Outwardly, to be sure, they put an end to all direct preparation for an artistic career; but it was prosecuted with all the more inward energy. Schumann's previous progress could not have been better or more surely carried on in its peculiar form than by the continuous, critical, direct intercourse into which he now entered with the best musicians, not only of his own, but of past time.

Long before this period, at those regular meetings of his musical friends devoted to the performance of chamber music, which took place during his early days of study, critical explanations of art questions were eagerly encouraged, and we might have shown ere this the advantageous

influence which they exerted over him. Now, when he had assumed the editorship of a newspaper with a decided and pronounced principle, his development must become more regular and conformable to law in this direction also. *Æsthetic* disquisitions upon the nature and significance of old and new masters went hand in hand with the technical analysis of their compositions.

Through this work he gained a clearer insight into his own mission, but also a gradually increasing mastery of his materials, without which the fulfilment of his task would have been impossible. The deeper he penetrated into the spirit of Bach, Beethoven, and Mozart, and the more closely he became encompassed by Schubert's wondrous strains, the louder must those chords of his own soul vibrate, which hitherto had been softly stirred, but had never sounded clearly; the more distinctly, too, the voices of the age fell upon his ear amidst these new labours, the nearer to him approached Mendelssohn, Chopin, and a long list of lesser masters of the present day, and with the greater knowledge was he enabled to grasp the ideal of the age that he might blend and unite it with his own.

That unconscious impulse which was apparent even in his earliest childhood, and which had led him from that time forth, now gradually awoke to full consciousness. Romantic infinity and immensity became the chief objects of his artistic activity, and he became the purest representative of musical romanticism, so much so, indeed, that it led him to create an entirely new system of *technique*. We have elsewhere<sup>1</sup> tried to prove that the champions of musical romanticism, Carl Maria von Weber, Franz Schubert, Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, and Robert Schumann, are not romanticists in opposition to the classicists, but because

<sup>1</sup> "General History of Music," p. 289.

they made romanticism itself the object of their artistic achievement, because they strove to make a good use musically of the treasures which the romantic school of poetry laid bare. We have also shown his mental progress in his own works up to that period in which another more purely external event again gave his mind a fresh bent.



## CHAPTER III.

## OPPOSITIONAL COMPOSITIONS (OP. I.-XXIII.).

IN these first works Schumann closely approaches the manner of Franz Schubert, although we can already perceive that profound difference which afterwards became more and more marked, demanding its distinct position in art as well as in regard to other romanticists. Schubert was the first to discover adequate form for the lyric isolation of a detached emotion. The great masters of the past, Bach, Haendel, Gluck, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, worked under the compelling power of the predominating ideas of mind and imagination, and embodied the poetic side of life in broad and grand instrumental forms. Schubert made the individual sentiment of a distinct subject the object of his representation, and thus brought the song to its highest perfection of form; but at the same time he suggested those minor instrumental forms in which modern masters have accomplished such imperishable work, and which were carried to such especial perfection by Schumann.

Bach, the real founder of this whole school, for it was by him that the just claims of subjectivity in the development of music were first proved, like Haendel surrendered his own subjectivity to Christian views of life; Gluck, the creator of grand opera, bartered his for the inflexibility of the antique mould; Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven allowed the wonders of Nature and great historical events to affect



their individuality, which grew in and with these, so that even the two masters endowed with the richest and deepest subjectiveness, Mozart and Beethoven, failed to find tone and form for its distinct, individual expression. They accustomed themselves to consider everything on the vastest scale of dimensions, in the broadest relations, so that in their hands even the song became a *scena*, and the lesser instrumental forms the mere frame for manifold pictures not elaborated in detail, but most dramatically grouped.

Franz Schubert was the first to recover the adequate form for the song. While he simplified all the wearisome apparatus of the afore-mentioned masters, without in any way detracting from the wealth of their materials, he attained that concise song-form in which the lyric mood is completely, exhaustively, and adequately expressed. He adhered closely to the strophic verse-structure which he imitated in the rich materials of his predecessors, giving it new musical shape in accordance with the text.

In the domain of instrumental music he only won similar success in those compositions where the conventional form is already distinctly transmitted as a finished type, such as the march, waltz, polonaise, or variation. In all other instrumental works this master affords a most striking proof that only the directness and simplicity of a Haydn are capable of writing great and broadly significant instrumental works, symphonies and sonatas, without an especial object for representation; that, when this simplicity disappears, the entire subjectivity must be concentrated upon determinate images, which it marshals before the imagination, if really important instrumental works are to be produced. In these songs and terse instrumental forms, the construction predetermined for him, checked Schubert's fancy and guided it to stable ground. In the larger, broader forms, which are only traced in their

most external outlines, his fancy was frequently lost in riotous revelry overwhelming all form, in sporting with splendid, but generally mentally incoherent images. The significance of that really essential element of great instrumental forms, contrast, was never fully apparent to Schubert, nor did he often attempt a dialectic development of ideas. With him picture usually succeeds picture, connected only by his own strong and gifted subjectivity.

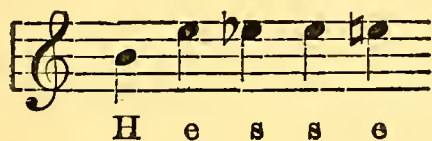
But in this regard, Schumann from the first took a most opposite, and, as we have already said, the only correct position. He never regarded music otherwise than as the art of representing those things which stirred his soul. We have seen how early the creative impulse awoke within him, and also that he instantly employed it to represent determinate objects. He tried to fix in tones *names, persons, and individual experiences*, and this tendency soon so completely mastered him that things gradually ceased to have much significance for him, save in as far as they were capable of musical transformation; thus he became ever more and more alienated from the external world.

This peculiar tendency, which was conditional upon his high position as artist and man of culture, naturally led him to work chiefly in the field of instrumental composition. This not only afforded infinitely more extensive and more refined material for the secret woof and warp of the spirit, and allowed it to reach more energetic, direct expression than vocal composition, but moreover it, and it only, rendered possible such honest, palpable representation and reproduction as Schumann attempted in certain of his earliest works.

The tendency to place all his work under the direct influence of determinate objects is most conspicuous in those compositions written upon names represented by musical notes (Op. 1. and 9), and in those where he tries to repre-

sent the various emotions of his own soul and his spiritual surroundings objectively considered in various ways (Op. 6, 9, 11).

The idea of using a name represented in musical notes as the motive of a composition is not new. Since Bach used his own name as the theme for a fugue, many have imitated his example, as for instance the deceased organist



But to none of them did the theme thus acquired have the same significance as to Schumann. To Bach and his successors it merely formed a basis for farther fugue work, usually but little influenced by it. Schumann, on the contrary, made the compositions developed from such borrowed names demonstrations of homage to the loved and honoured bearers of them. They were thus woven into the work as they lived in the poet's fancy, and therefore exercised a marked influence upon the entire structure of the composition, in due correspondence with which Schumann chose the form of the variations which such a direct influence rendered feasible.

Opus 1.<sup>1</sup> on the name:



written in the first half of the year 1830 and published in July, 1832, was inspired by a beautiful young woman, Meta Abegg, whose acquaintance he made at a ball in

<sup>1</sup> Theme on the name Abegg arranged with variations for piano. Dedicated to Pauline, Countess d'Abegg.



Mannheim. His relations with the young lady were undoubtedly of a purely conventional nature; indeed, he felt obliged to dedicate the variations, not to her, but to an imaginary "Pauline, Countess d'Abegg."

The work interests us from the point of form only, as showing how much technical skill in handling his material Schumann had gained from the peculiar nature of his development up to this time, and here we may note the interesting fact that he has used the correct musical form and observed the laws of music instinctively, however unskilfully he may have done it. The motive is worked up, probably in memory of the ball which inspired it, in waltz form, and an imprint is given it as strongly rhythmical as it is harmonious, no new melodic motive being taken up; the second part reverses the original motive. The lack of technical knowledge is more apparent in the three variations following next in order. The original concise form is retained, but it is so heavily loaded with rich harmonic apparatus, particularly in the first two variations, that it becomes fairly monstrous. A few years later he would have made a very different thing of this wealth of harmonies. The finale is far freer and more intelligible in form, and here we can already recognize the hand which was afterwards to work out such enchanting music from harmonies and to construct therefrom such wonderful melodies. Passages like :







are so singularly characteristic of Schumann as to be fully descriptive of his personality ; no less so is the close :

The image displays three systems of musical notation for piano, each consisting of a treble and a bass staff. The first system begins with a treble staff containing a melodic line with various accidentals (sharps, flats, naturals) and a bass staff with a simple accompaniment. The dynamic marking *pp* (pianissimo) is placed below the first measure, and *perdendosi* (fading away) is written below the second measure. The second system continues the melodic and accompanimental lines, with the dynamic marking *sino al ppp* (until pianississimo) appearing below the third measure. The third system concludes the piece with a final cadence in both staves, marked with a double bar line.

The theme which he borrowed in similar fashion from the name of the little town of "Asch," situated on the boundaries of Bohemia and Saxony, and upon which he wrote his Opus 9, "Carnival. Scènes Mignonnes," was much more delicately elaborated, as well as more original and profound.

In April of the year 1834. Ernestine von Fricken, born

in the above-named town, entered Wieck's family to take piano lessons of that already famous teacher. An ardent affection for her was soon kindled in Schumann's breast, and under its direct inspiration most of this work was composed. Schumann, as he states in a letter to his friend Henrietta Voigt,<sup>1</sup> took great pleasure in the "musical" name of her birthplace, because the letters composing it were also the only musical letters in his own name.<sup>2</sup> He therefore used them in this double significance as the basis of his detached pictures, and in the work to which we have alluded introduces them for stronger accentuation as :

## SPHINXES.



From the above-mentioned letter we also learn that this setting and harmonization pleased him most as "very painful":



We get still farther explanation of the meaning of various numbers from Schumann himself in another letter addressed to Ignaz Moscheles, September 22, 1837: "The

<sup>1</sup> Wasielewski, p. 92.

<sup>2</sup> The German music H is the English B.



Carnival was written for an occasion, and is for the most part and with the exception of three or four movements, constructed entirely upon the notes A, S, C, H (B), which spell the name of a little Bohemian town, where I had a musical lady friend, but which also, strange to say, are the only musical letters in my name. The titles I added afterwards. Is not music always sufficient unto itself, and does it not speak for itself? *Estrella* is such a name as one might put beneath a portrait to hold the picture faster; *Reconnaissance*, a recognition scene; *Aveu*, a confession of love; *Promenade*, a walk such as people take arm in arm with their partners at a German party."

In an article on "Franz Liszt,"<sup>1</sup> he speaks of that famous performer's sojourn and concerts at Dresden and Leipsic, and mentions that at a certain concert<sup>2</sup> he played compositions by Mendelssohn and Hiller, and fragments from Schumann's "Carnival."<sup>3</sup> In reference to this he writes as follows: "My slight doubts as to whether such rhapsodical carnival life would make any impression upon a crowd were met by him (that is, Liszt) with the firm opinion that he hoped it would. Yet I think he was mistaken. A few words only in regard to the composition, which owes its origin to chance. The name of a little town where a musical acquaintance of mine lived, contained only letters which are to be found in the musical scale, and which are also to be found in my own name; this coincidence suggested one of those musical jests which were in vogue before the days of Bach. One piece was finished after another, and this was just at the carnival season of the year 1835, in serious mood moreover, and under singular circumstances. I afterwards named the separate numbers, and called the entire collection 'The Carnival.' Although many

<sup>1</sup> "Collected Writings," vol. iii., p. 231.

<sup>2</sup> March 30, 1840.

<sup>3</sup> Nos. 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 13, 16, 15, 19, and 21.



things in it may charm certain individuals, yet the musical moods change too rapidly to be easily followed by a whole audience which does not care to be startled every moment. My amiable friend, as I said, had not taken this into consideration, and although he played with such sympathy and geniality that it could not fail to strike a few, the masses were not moved."

We see from these communications that Schumann had constructed a complete image of the Carnival in his fancy, nor do we lack even the typical masquerade figures: clown, harlequin, pantaloon, and columbine. The other characters belong to the "Davidsbündlerschaft," of which Schumann says in the preface to his collected works: "And here let me speak of a society which was more than secret, for it existed only in the brain of its founder, that of the Davidites (Davidsbündler). In order to give utterance to various views in regard to art, it seemed fitting to invent certain contrasted artistic individualities, of whom Florestan and Eusebius were the chief, Master Raro standing half-way between as mediator."

This Davidsbündlerschaft is woven into the "Journal of Music" like a red thread (and, as we might also add, runs through the works of this first period) uniting "Truth and Poetry" in humorous fashion.<sup>1</sup>

We deem it no mere romantic fancy, but a necessity of his whole nature and previous development, that Schumann should thus strive to personify the two most prominent traits of his character, dreamy tenderness and mysti-

<sup>1</sup> Certain works of this period even bear these names instead of his own, as, Davidsbündler Dances for piano, dedicated to Walter von Goethe by Florestan and Eusebius (1838), published by Robert Frieze; and Piano Sonato, dedicated to Clara by Florestan and Eusebius (Op. 11, 1836). The latter work did not appear under the composer's name till 1840.

cism as Eusebius, and passionate energy as Florestan. He had early recognized it to be his most especial mission to lay bare his soul and pour it forth in music, nor could this be more freely and more surely accomplished than by an attempt to mould this twofold nature in twofold form, and to study the resultant image.

Thus only was such a coalition feasible as Schumann laboured for in Master Raro; it is merely an unfortunate chance that he did not completely achieve it. Even in the criticism of the Chopin variations already mentioned, the two characters play their distinct parts, as they also do in a letter to Henrietta Voigt. Here Master Raro is probably to be taken as meaning Friedrich Wieck.

There also belonged to the Davidsbündlerschaft, Serpentinus and Jonathan (Carl Bank and probably Ludwig Schunke), Eleonore, afterwards Aspasia, whom Schumann himself unmask in the letter quoted above, as the often mentioned Mrs. Henrietta Voigt.

This procedure, viewed in the clearest light, is certainly based upon the Jean Paul tendency to which his youthful spirit bowed. It is the self-same romantic idealization of all reality, the fanciful embellishment which he learned from Jean Paul, and practised here with full consciousness. But for him the attempt had the great advantage that all those nearest his heart also appeared as bright particular stars in his imagination, and helped to disseminate order and moderation. His imagination, unschooled by musical etymology, greatly needed such experiments to teach him to provide proper objects for artistically rounded representation. It must rest upon the substantial world of reality if it would not go astray amid shadowy cloud-forms. At the same time he was aroused to let the actual world and its tangible creations predominate in his work from their more prosaic side.

He adorned the original poetic picture with such a wealth of arabesque that it at last was almost lost from sight, the real starting-point becoming more and more difficult of recognition, and the images soon losing all relation to the actual world.

When he reached the summit of his creative power, when he had gained that control of his imagination as well as of his materials which enabled him to create immortal masterpieces, he ceased to require these external aids, and even began to blot them out from his earlier works, as in the new edition of the "Davidsbündlertänze"<sup>1</sup> (Op. 6), revised by him, in which he not only suppressed the "wise saw" prefixed to the title in the first edition:

"In each and every age  
Allied are joy and grief:  
Forget not God when all is bright,  
And in your woe let hope assuage,"

but he also omitted the numerous titles referring to the supposed origin of the separate numbers in the brains of Eusebius and Florestan.

In this Davidsbündlerschaft are also concentrated the active forces at his disposal for his battle with the Philistines. He introduced this contest several times quite directly and spontaneously in what is known as the "Grossvater-tanz":



and as just at this period this battle influenced all his work more or less decidedly, the title of "oppositional

<sup>1</sup> Written in 1837, and published in February, 1838.



compositions" seems justified, even if Schumann had not assumed, as we can prove that he did, a position utterly opposed to the musical practice of his time.

We see how soon he took up this stand consciously, by Opus 2,<sup>1</sup> "Papillons," finished as early as 1831, some parts of it having been written at Heidelberg. He himself explains parts of it in a letter to Henrietta Voigt (summer of 1834): "That would even furnish us," he writes, "with a bridge to the Papillons: for we love to think of the Psyche soaring above the body which has crumbled into dust. I might tell you much on this point, if Jean Paul had not done it far better already. If you should have a spare moment, I beg you to read the last chapter of the 'Flegeljahre,' where you will find the whole thing set down in black and white, even to the Riesenstiefel in F sharp (the end of the 'Flegeljahre' always makes me feel as if the play were over, but the curtain were still up). I may also state that I added the text to the music, and not *vice versâ*, otherwise I should think it a 'silly undertaking.' Only the last number, which by playful hap forms the answer to the first, was directly inspired by Jean Paul." And in a note to a criticism of the "Papillons" in the "Vienna Musical Journal," No. 26, 1832, in which the critic declares that he sees nothing more than a reflection of butterfly nature in the "for the most part wantonly fickle and coquettish" Papillons, Schumann observes: "The Papillons should be something very different." And yet we must confess that they have never acquired the significance which the youth ascribed to them. The mature Schumann, under the impression of the great picture revealed to us by Jean Paul in the last chapter of the "Flegeljahre," would have given us very different work

<sup>1</sup> "Papillons pour le Piano seul," No. 1, 3, 4, 6, 8. Written in 1829; 2, 5, 7, 9, 10, in 1831.

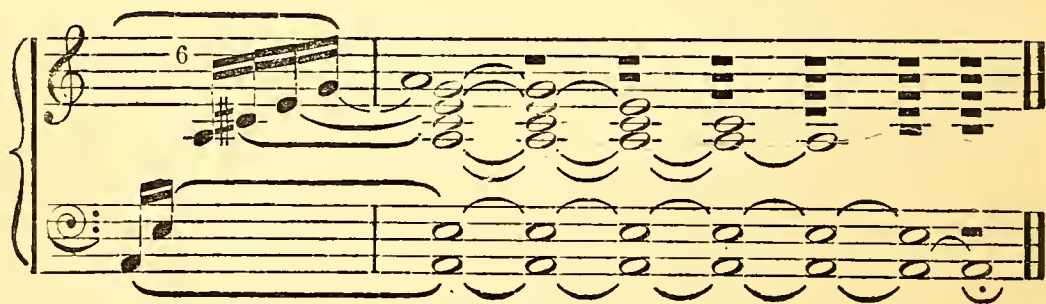
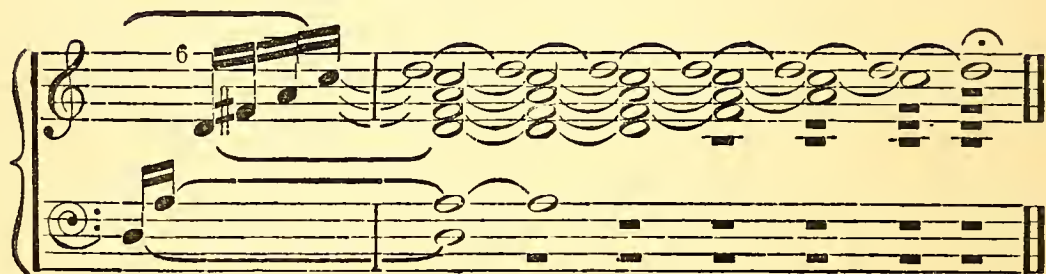


from these "dance melodies, to which love words are added as text."

The piano studies after Paganini's "Caprices," published as Op. 3, were of vast importance to Schumann, in so far as they increased his technical skill in handling his tools. He hints at this himself in the preface: "The many difficulties, technical as well as harmonic, which the editor has encountered in arranging these Caprices, have only added to the pleasure of the task."

This preface offers us such valuable connecting links with the characteristic quality of Schumann's peculiar bent at this date, that we gladly linger over it. It shows us, above all, how carefully he studied the *technique* of the piano. With appropriate remarks on the study and execution of the different Caprices, he gives very sensible directions for the necessary preparatory studies, such as finger exercises, touch, &c., and to these are added observations as acute and intelligent as could be made by any finished performer. Undoubtedly inspired by Chopin, he then further seeks to acquire unusual effects by a peculiar method of piano playing, as in the following exercises:





At the same time he does not fail to add that the examples given should only be taken as leading to others of a similar nature. He even advises advanced pupils to play exercises from books of instruction but seldom, rather to compose them for themselves, and perhaps use them as preludes to free improvisation, as all could then be worked up with far greater life and variety.

Still he regards these studies as necessary preliminaries to the execution of artistic work. "Then, after the elimination of all external difficulties, the imagination can move with greater ease and security, can give its creations life, light, and shade, and readily perfect what may still be lacking in spontaneity of composition." In addition to this, he then advises: "For practice in the capriccio style, I would recommend to pianists, besides the more old-fashioned works of Müller, those of Felix Mendelssohn, especially that (classic) in F sharp; and for acquiring a brilliant style of playing, the comparatively unknown but very clever caprices by J. Pohl. Some of the fugues from Bach's "Wohltemperirte Clavier" might also be profitably studied for this purpose, say those in C min., D maj., E min., F maj., G maj., in the first volume. and various others." This especial allusion to Mendelssohn's *classic* caprice is also worthy of note as showing the fundamental difference in the evolution of two masters otherwise so closely allied. Mendelssohn's whole education was early directed to giving his rich intellect that harmonious perfection and refinement upon which the consummate form of his artistic utterances rests. Therefore even his earliest artistic productions reveal an outward perfection scarcely consonant with their substance. His own individuality seems still so constrained by formality, it is still so overgrown with foreign matter learned in the schools, that it is hardly to be recognized. But by this very perfection he awed and impressed Schumann, whose strong mind, as we have seen, was forced to yield to foreign influences before his unbounded imagination could be schooled and restrained. Mendelssohn was obliged, by renewed efforts, to burst the fetters of form in which conventions had bound his fancy and his whole inner man, that they might break forth into freedom; while Schumann strove with equal



energy to acquire the laws of form in which his education was so deficient. In this sense he considered that caprice classic, as being perfect in form.

He published a second book of similar compositions during the following year under the title: "Six Concert Studies for the Piano, Op. 10." In regard to the distinctive characteristics of the two volumes, he himself declares: <sup>1</sup>—

"I placed an opus number on these studies because the publisher said that it would make them 'go' better—a reason to which my numerous objections must needs yield. But I quietly considered the 10 (for I have not yet reached the ninth muse) as the symbol of an unknown quantity, and the composition up to the very basses, the richer middle parts, and especially the wealth of harmony, and here and there the more supple finish of the forms, as thoroughly Paganini-like. But if it be commendable to appropriate the idea of a superior with love and admiration, to remodel and reproduce it, I may perhaps lay claim to commendation. When I published an earlier book of studies after Paganini, I copied the originals, perhaps to their detriment, almost note for note, merely adding harmonies to them; but now I have broken loose from the pedantry of a literal translation, and desire to give the work in hand the character of an original piano composition, in which the violin origin is forgotten, without causing any loss of poetical ideas. When I say that much was necessarily altered, omitted, or added in order to attain this end, I think I need not add that the work was always done with the conscientious care which so great and honoured a spirit demands."

The gain which resulted to his growth from the arrange-

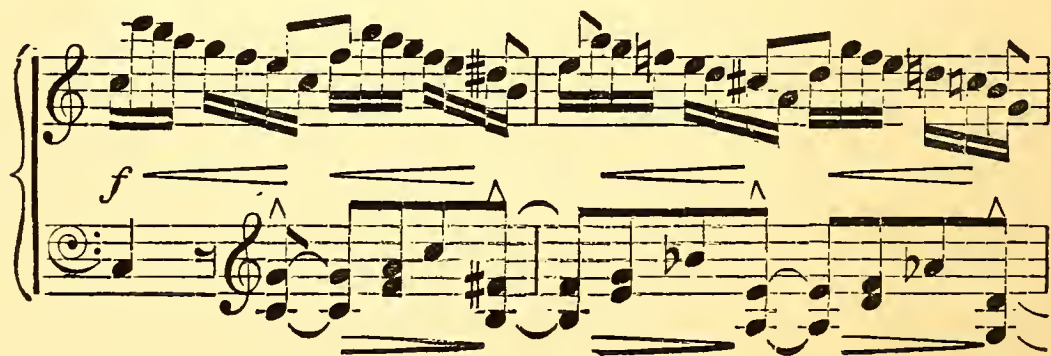
<sup>1</sup> "Collected Works," vol. ii., p. 29.



ment of these Caprices cannot be overrated. The difficulty of harmonizing them was not slight. They required a rich harmonic development, such as was consonant with his whole individuality. But in elaborating this there was great danger of injuring the peculiar character of the composition, of clogging the light-winged studies, and impeding them in their "strange, whimsical flight." But Schumann's chief task was just this, to impress them more firmly with this character; he wished not only to add a mere bass accompaniment, but also to transcribe the studies for the piano, still preserving their original nature, and thus he was led to invent that polyphonic piano-forte style which makes him the most important of the romanticists. This polyphonic style of instrumental music does not require a determinate number of parts as that of vocal music does, but only demands a free and intelligent exhibition of the harmonic materials in a greater or less number of parts. The orchestra, in its present construction, contains various instruments which cannot be used in the polyphonic treatment of the voice, such as the clumsy brass, and the instruments of percussion, which are lacking in tone; these require a different polyphonic treatment from the voice.

In instrumental polyphony the differing tone of the various instruments is no less decisive than the peculiar style of treatment. Even the piano can be but ill adapted to vocal polyphony; its tone not being so far-reaching or so enduring as the singing tone or the tone of the organ, it is difficult to follow the progress of the separate parts in continuous connection. Moreover, in the polyphonic treatment the instrument is apt to lose its highest charm, fullness of tone and melody. The most powerful and brilliant treatment of the piano is always the harmonic. But in order to remove the materialistic effect of this treatment,

it is again necessary either to introduce the chords in the most transparent open position, or to resolve them into easy, airy figure-work. We have no space to explain still further how this peculiar treatment of the piano, particularly inspired by J. S. Bach's corresponding piano compositions, came into prevalent use; how it called forth new forms in Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, and was developed with increasing brilliancy by the masters of virtuoso piano-playing, Clementi, Field, Hummel, &c. We might, ere now, have said that Schumann energetically joined in this effort to mould the polyphonic piano style in his own peculiar fashion. The only object of the preparatory studies already mentioned, upon which he insists in the preface to his Opus 3, is to promote the peculiar polyphony of the piano method, to heighten the fulness of tone in the instrument, and to increase its effect. The transcription of the Paganini Caprices gave him opportunity to practise this style. With his own rare vigour he grasped the often extravagant images of Paganini in their innermost essence, he followed them in their often excessively curious form and caught their most secret harmony, and although we cannot regard such counterpoint as this:





as either especially charming or worthy of imitation, still it shows us how firmly Schumann was determined to bend even harmonic forms and masses to more polyphonic treatment, and to create for himself that pianoforte method which afforded adequate means of representing the enchanting, gloriously ideal and romantic dream-world in which he lived. The very next work, completed during that same year (1832), Op. 4, "Intermezzi for Piano," clearly proves that the arrangement of those Paganini studies was of extraordinary technical advantage to him. He now seemed so fully master of the newly sought system of piano *technique*, that these intermezzi appear to be governed far more by that system than by any resistless idea. With the exception of the fifth intermezzo, whose enchanting beginning:

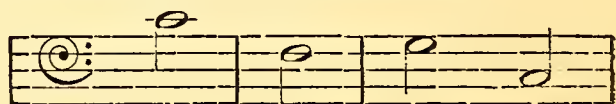


excellently characterizes the weak point of Schumann's individuality, changing in the "ALTERNATIVO" into subtly speculative activity, we might imagine this work to be the



continued independent study of pianoforte *technique* which he began with the Paganini "Études." The division strictly adhered to of five intermezzi into three parts is also characteristic. The middle movement (alternativo) is regularly kept in another key. Here, too, as usual, he is influenced by definite ideas with which he connects certain numbers, No. 2 pointing directly to such a poetic picture, by the words subjoined, "*Meine Ruh' ist hin.*" *Technique*, nevertheless, prevailed over ideas, and the latter are therefore less evident in this composition, so that the name seems strangely apt. They are indeed interludes, standing in external connection only with the tragic development. Much the same thing may be said of the "Impromptus" (Op. 5), written in 1833, on a theme<sup>1</sup> by Clara Wieck, in which the bass, characteristically enough, predominates, beginning as introduction to the work.

In the first two numbers it governs the whole composition; but in the second the melody of the theme appears, disguised and overgrown by Schumann's imagery. In the third, both bass and melody appear resolved into light chords; the fourth number then soars above the original bass. In the following number also, the latter (twice augmented in  $\frac{6}{8}$  time) governs the form, and only detached melodic traces of the theme are to be distinguished. The next number (A minor) stands in a more purely subjective relation, and leads up to another which shows the melody of the theme in more adequate shape in the bass. The next two numbers paraphrase and vary this number (No. 7), and lead to the finale, No. 10, which takes as its motive the two opening measures, the bass cadence:



<sup>1</sup> Printed with variations as Op. 5



carrying the whole, magnificently elaborated, up to the re-appearance of the opening phrase in octaves, to which, somewhat varied towards the end, the second half of the melody is then added.

In studying the whole arrangement and execution of this work, it is unmistakable that here Schumann was again guided by a very distinct idea. It is the homage which he offers to the artist who gave him the theme worked up. Their hearts do not seem to have met as yet, but he already felt the deepest reverence for her genius. He writes from Zwickau (January 10, 1833) to Wieck: "You are answerable for the fact that Zwickau was filled with enthusiasm for the first time in its life. When she (Clara) is mentioned, every eye grows eloquent and eager." But the homage of the "Impromptus" was paid to her genius only, and differs essentially from that which he laid at the feet of his sweetheart, and his wife in later years. In place of the deeply tender, spiritual meaning which we find in his later works of the kind, we have here pure intellect, while warmth and fervour of emotion do their best to replace enthusiastic ecstasy.

Schumann, as we have seen, was wont to analyze his theme, and in each of the two parts he doubtless embodied a distinct conception; in the melody it may be the lovely image of the fair artist, for wherever it appears it is interwoven with figure-work of dazzling splendour; in the bass motive, we may see the ardent admiration which he felt for her genius, which appears now calm, now passionate, and at the close is completely divorced from the much admired image of his love. But this would be too material a light in which to view the work, and it therefore interests us in its conventional, rather than in its ideal form. This form is so fully the result of the new system of *technique* that we can clearly trace that system in its outlines.

Schumann had now thoroughly mastered those polar points in the tonic, dominant and sub-dominant, which were destined to be the formal substratum of his harmony, however rich and varied it might be. The perception of which the schools had given him but partial glimpses, that the whole formal harmonic mould of a work of art depended only upon that process of the working of the dominant innate in the nature of the entire mass of material to be represented, was firmly fixed by practice, and he never denied this truth in his future work. He never abandoned that natural process of formation, but he never ceased his efforts to transmute it, to grasp its laws more completely. At the same time he gained a tolerable control of the polyphony alluded to above, and it soon appeared in the open position of chords, tempering the massive, material nature of their sound.

He then tried to obtain a living tissue of parts by changing and passing tones and suspensions, whereby he is led to that free introduction of dissonances which was yet to become such a distinctive mark of his whole method of writing, as well as such an eloquent means of expressing the whole romantic subjectivity. Passages like the following :





were in direct opposition to the laws of the old school. In the code of feeling of the new era, they were accepted, and rightfully so. *Theory concerns merely the artistic representation of form. In regard to the especial form, theory must recognize the right of the individual, and allow him to reveal himself in purely individual traits.* We shall attempt still farther to justify the characteristic mentioned above, hereafter.

With this work, therefore, Schumann took an important step forward in the path of his progress. The new technique, and with it the essential outlines of the forms of the new school, which in the works already mentioned, as well as in the two of earlier origin, published later as Op. 7 and 8; "Toccata" (Op. 7),<sup>1</sup> and "Allegro" (Op. 8),<sup>2</sup> had only attained vague and imperfect form, were in this work displayed in full perfection. Nothing now was lacking but that they should be pervaded and spiritualized by a tender and poetical meaning. Thus arose: "The Carnival" (Op. 9, 1834-35), both Sonatas (Op. 11 and 22, 1833-35), the "Symphonic Studies" (Op. 13, 1834), the "Phantasie" (Op. 17, 1836), and the "Concerto without Orchestral Accompaniment" (Op. 14, 1835), in which the

<sup>1</sup> Composed in 1830, revised in 1833.

<sup>2</sup> Composed in 1831.



profound-meaning again injures and impedes the perfect construction in various ways, until it at last appears fully formed in Op. 6, "The Davidites" ("Die Davidsbündler"), more particularly in Op. 12, "Fantasiestücke" (both finished in 1837), in the "Kinder Scenen," Op. 15 (1838), "Kreisleriana," Op. 16, and the succeeding works.

Having reached a decided turning-point in his development in Op. 5, nothing was more natural than that Schumann should try to embody in a single work the sum total of his inner life in so far as it had taken distinct shape. We might ere now have shown this inner life to be concentrated upon vivid, ideally bright images, which he combined in his "Carnival" into one radiant picture. We have already spoken of the motive underlying most of the separate scenes. The whole picture became so distinct to his fancy, that to make it complete he introduced yet other figures than those to which we have referred. Besides Clown, Pantaloon, Columbine, and Harlequin, we have Chopin, Paganini, and Chiarina, in allusion to Clara, who had hitherto shown such helpful interest in his progress, nor did he fail in the "Papillons" to recall Jean Paul, to whom he thus far owed more than to all the others. To lend the utmost possible semblance of reality to the picture, the "Preamble" takes us directly into the gay ball-room, and we have the dances and other appropriate scenes, "Aveu," "Reconnaissance," and "Promenade." Nor do we lack "Coquette" and "Replique," the "March of the Davidites against the Philistines," and the "Grossvatertanz," concluding the whole.

What especially surprises us in this work is the great truth and delicacy with which the given theme is moulded to characterize the various images and situations accurately. It is easy to distinguish the dull, clumsy Clown:





from the nimble Harlequin with his capers and grimaces:



or from that mischievous and lightly tripping pair, Pantaloon and Columbine:



even without the titles, which are even less necessary to enable us to recognize, in the various groups, the dreamy Eusebius:



or the stormy Florestan, who might fly away with the "Papillons," as Cupid did with Pysche:

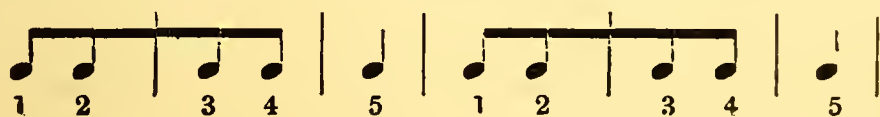


or the Coquette, who is actually foreign to the picture, the only reason for her appearance being the repeated introduction of the leading motive, albeit it is not really worked out here:





For her the theme is merely the mask under cover of which she has crept in ; she having been accounted for in the “Replique” which follows, the original motive again governs the whole future form and all the gay life down to that march which, characteristically enough, is written in three-four time. We do not believe that Schumann was seduced into substituting a three-part for the usual two-part measure, by the “Grossvatertanz.” We rather regard it as a lucky indication of the feeling guiding him here. Signs from the sixteenth century lead us to suppose that marches at that time were generally written in three-four rhythm, and the assertion that foot-soldiers were then led to the attack by five regularly repeated trumpet blasts can only be supported by the theory of a triple time.



The verses inspired by such trumpet marches confirm our supposition.<sup>1</sup> The elaboration of the *motivi* thus acquired is naturally more thematic than organic, agreeably with this conception. Certain images and situations are embodied in them, which should be exhibited and represented in various lights and in their various mutual relations, but they are ranked side by side rather than

<sup>1</sup> See the author's “Art of Composition,” vol. ii., p. 296.

developed. The composer characterized his theme by restless persistence. He has an inexhaustible store of harmonic, melodic, and rhythmic devices to form these characteristic images from his *motivi*, but he is then forced simply to place them side by side. Nothing is, properly speaking, freshly evolved from the one part to throw new light upon the other, but they are ranged closely together, the motive merely forming the connecting link. The whole fabric thus acquires a bright and somewhat motley hue, resembling the pot-pourri; the march is especially brilliant, this movement requiring the admission, intrinsically unjustifiable, of several parts of earlier numbers, as, for instance, the "Preamble" and "Pause," in order more closely to mark its special relation to the whole work.

In the "Fantasiestücke," "Kreisleriana," and "Kinder Scenen," Schumann first gained a capacity for greater organic development.

The lack of such a development is less apparent in the "Carnival," because it seems to be the result of the peculiar theme. It is sensibly felt in the two sonatas (Op. 11 and 22). In any case he was now attracted towards the sonata by a misconception of the innermost essence of the sonata form, as well as of the singular meaning which he infused into it. The sonata requires strong *organic* development, of which he was yet scarcely capable. The contemplation of his own mind as Florestan and Eusebius might well afford him matter for a long series, not of sonatas only, but of instrumental compositions of every kind, for the idea of the sonata as well as the symphony rests largely upon similar opposition. But then he should, in every instance, have tried to unite the divided views into one fixed phase of life, as in his mature instrumental works. He should have chosen his theme, not merely



under the influence of that twofold aspect, but also with a knowledge of the necessity for the mutual reintegration of the two. However freely rhapsodic, aye, recitative-like, Beethoven's last sonatas are, this shaping principle, which finds its chief musical expression in the dominant effect, is always apparent, and so, therefore, is the original idea of the sonata form.

This shaping principle of the dominant effect was not fully manifest to Schumann until he attempted to compose songs. The sonatas of this first period accordingly display a luxuriant wealth of imagery, but the images are only outwardly connected, and not united by inward evolution. As in the case of Schubert's sonatas, we scarcely recognize an innate necessity for the opposition of the contrasted parts, and although the latter are far more plainly expressed by Schumann than by Schubert, we are equally far from receiving a total impression, because that innate necessity which reconciles us to opposition is lacking. The introduction to the F sharp minor sonata is of enchanting sweetness, with its love-breathing romance and longing. Eusebius is more fully understood by the master than in any other passage of his works, save in the second motive of the "Allegro vivace;" nor did the stormy passion of Florestan ever find more eloquent expression than in the leading thought of this same movement; but they do not supplement each other, as is natural to the idea of the sonata, in organic growth accordant with nature. We see modelled before us the picture of a fierce battle of those contending elements, a battle which leads to no reconciliation, but to the destruction of the dominant thought.

The "Aria," which follows, again seems like a mere variation of the ethical meaning of the introduction, which it almost exceeds in tenderness and fervour. The two succeeding movements, the "Scherzo" and "Finale," on the con-

trary, glitter and gleam once more with the most brilliant wealth of imagery possible to our youthful master's fancy. The ball-room again plays a significant part in Florestan's dreams; and thus the lively pictures which he now lightly sketches, now paints in brighter hues, and which he indicates somewhat more closely in the *intermezzo alla burla ma pomposa*, here find appropriate place. The short recitative, as well as the passage marked *quasi oboe*, probably refers to quite distinct events. Finally, in the last number, these opposite sides of Schumann's nature appear even more forcibly, but also more irreconcilable than ever. Image is heaped upon image, all of dazzling beauty and maturity, but they are wholly disconnected, only outwardly united as before.

We shall observe this decided defect in the whole structure of the sonata still more clearly when we come to consider similar works in which he adds to this form every expedient of the new school in the greatest perfection. The "Fantasie" (Op. 17) shows how fertile his fancy now proved, and how freely constructive it was when not hampered by the fetters of form. In regard to the origin of this work, we are told that Schumann intended to devote the possible profits of it to the Beethoven memorial to be erected at Bonn, and therefore meant to call it "Obolus." The separate parts were to be named "Ruins," "Triumphal Arch," and "Starry Crown." The plan was abandoned, and the names were therefore set aside, a motto written by Franz Schlegel:

' Through all sounds soundeth  
On this bright earth of ours,  
One note distinct and clear  
To him who listens secretly,"

being substituted.

He shows us a picture abounding in figures, but more

imaginative than tuneful. Unity of organic development is therefore less missed here than in those works in sonata form, where it is a prime factor.

This want of unity of form is almost more noticeable than it is in the earlier works, in the first movement of the next sonata—Op. 14—(first printed as “Concerto without Orchestral Accompaniment,” in a later edition as “Third Grand Sonata”), this being conceived on a larger, grander scale than the F sharp minor sonata. The separate parts are neither so sweet nor so wildly passionate, but they are more energetic and masculine in character, and had Schumann succeeded in binding them together with more intentional harmony, had he grasped the idea of the sonata with stronger harmonic unity, he would here have found the sonata measure of the new school. But the harmonic structure of the form, simple in spite of its extravagance, was to be revealed to him first through the medium of song; song-writing was first to give him complete control of that constructive process from which alone orchestral forms can spring. Now, he could only work out short motives thematically in the manner described; masterly, charming, and delicate as his method of doing this might be, he could not obtain breadth of form. In the “Scherzo” the rhythm and firm periodic construction became formal bonds which bound his neatly modelled images into solid groups. Here all is more firmly modelled, and the rhythmic relations in which the separate parts stand allow us more readily to dispense with closer harmonic relations. He also managed to mould the rhythm in a variety of ways, without falling into the mannerism of syncopation.

The “Quasi Variazioni,” which follow, are again elaborated from a theme (“Andantino”) by Clara Wieck, not as previously, as an act of homage to the *artist*, but as a *gift*



*from the heart*, which was to find its echo in the kindred heart. Not cool admiration, but the warmest devotion speaks in these strains, and this is one of the most perfect works which Schumann ever wrote. In the closing motive we cease to recognize Florestan and Eusebius, it being much more evidently inspired by the theme of the variations, and seeming like a paraphrase of Lenau's "Schilf Lieder" (Reed songs).

"Certainly," he writes to Dorn (Sept. 5, 1839), "the battles which Clara has cost me must be largely reflected in my music, and much of it must have been caused by them; she was almost the sole inspiration of the Concerto, the Sonata, the Davidsbündler dances, the Kreisleriana, and the Novelettes."

† The third sonata (Op. 22, G minor, begun in 1833, the last movement written in 1838) corresponded to the original idea of that form incomparably better than those hitherto described. The great moments of the general mood are condensed into broad melodies, from the varying treatment of which the separate movements are organically evolved, and at the same time the arrangement is quite that of the old sonata. The principal theme in the tonic, developed from a broad melody elaborated in various ways and reconciled by a more harmonically grounded interlude, is met by a contrast in the mediant, which is strongly impressed with romantic infinity in the syncopation, and in its method of treatment usually gives us the old form in a new shape. The farther course of this movement also fully corresponds to the original form of the sonata. The new spirit which had now so fully pervaded this old form is also shown by the singular fact that Schumann prescribed the tempo of this movement to be "*as fast as possible*," and towards the close added a "*faster*," and yet again "*still faster*." We cannot consider this an accident;



we take it to be less a strict direction for the performer, than a hint to him as to how Schumann regarded its performance in his own mind. His spirit was still cramped by attention to form; he still looked upon it as a clog which he hoped to cast aside as soon as possible, and although he fully acknowledged its necessity, he was more and more strongly impelled to press forward in spite of it, and his thoughts were ever more hastily developed. When, in later years, he mastered form, and no longer felt constrained by it, we find in him a riotous revelling in and with it. This foregoing direction may have arisen in this way, and if the performer follow Schumann's intention, he will be able to exceed the bounds of possibility in rapidity of execution, even if he begin "as fast as possible."

The second movement, "Andantino," again reveals the old form. A song movement, conceived in the spirit of the new school, in which the affecting "Ich grolle nicht" already exists in embryo, is varied in quite the old method; we also find here that wonderfully effective blending of double and triple *conflicting* rhythms:



produced by that effort to loose the bonds of rhythm without disturbing the rhythmic equipoise frequently found in the writings of Schumann and Chopin. The "Scherzo," too, keeps within the limits of the old form, and Schumann has even chosen one of the oldest forms, the Rondo, for the closing movement; this being, so far as we know, his first

attempt of the kind. According to his note-book, however, this movement was substituted for the original finale three years later.

This sonata, therefore, stands out pre-eminent among the other works of this period, as an attempt to infuse the new spirit into the old forms. Although it is not to be regarded as a failure, Schumann soon gave up all farther pursuance of this purpose, still lacking many essentials which he was destined to obtain by the writing of songs; but, more than all else, the *new forms* of the new school were not yet so far shaped that they could be considered as firmly fixed, and this work seemed to him to be his most pressing and immediate task.

The "Symphonic Studies" (Op. 13, 1834),<sup>1</sup> and the "Davidsbündlertänze"<sup>2</sup> (Op. 6, 1837), were a great advance towards the attainment of this end.

The "Symphonic Studies" were variations on a theme the melody of which, according to the composer's own note prefixed to the first edition, was derived from a friend (the father of Ernestine von Fricken, the friend of his youth, says Wasielewski). In the second edition, published in 1852, he changed the title to the far more appropriate one of "Studies in the form of Variations." Like the "Impromptus," they are far more interesting on account of their form than for any ideas contained in them, but they are to be preferred to those as being of a more graceful mould. He had notably increased his technical skill by writing a number of unpublished variations upon the "Sehnsuchtswalzer" and the allegretto from Beethoven's A major symphony. The very first of these variations shows what insight he had gained into the organic structure of the harmonic basis of a composition. This variation is thema-

<sup>1</sup> Appeared August, 1837, in a first edition; in a second in 1852; and in a third in 1861.

<sup>2</sup> Published in 1838.

tically developed, but not as hitherto in the mere effort to attain interesting harmony, rather from a full knowledge of its organic development through the working of the dominant. Tonic, dominant, and sub-dominant, and the corresponding mediant and sub-mediante for the minor key, are the points upon which the whole work hinges, and the keys upon which the working out rests. The same evidence, if not so strikingly, is given by the third variation treated in canon, as well as by the fourth and seventh variations, and in the rest of the composition the harmonic process of formation so governs the whole farther construction, that it is distinct and intelligible in form in spite of the elaborate execution and the great expenditure of material. The finale alone is put together bit by bit, like a mosaic, instead of being developed with any unity. In this work the new piano *technique* which we have described is undoubtedly apparent in a higher state of development than ever before, serving to display a greatly increased wealth of harmony, so that the fulness of sound of the instrument is brought out in all its glory, and yet the abundance of movement is so carefully borne in mind that the effect is always clear and vivid, never roughly materialistic. With all this, however, it still seems to work capriciously rather than of fixed intent; nor does the system become the bearer of a distinct and easily comprehensible idea until we reach the "Davidsbündlertänze."

We have already spoken explicitly enough of the significance of the "Davidsbündlerschaft," which gave rise to this work. At the first glance it seems surprising that Schumann should have given these compositions the collective name of "Davidsbündler-dances," when not one of them is written in dance form. But this title is in special allusion, not to the form, but to the idea which inspired the work. As the publisher of the third edition bids us, we must re-



member the fact that we have only to recall the "Marches of the Davidites against the Philistines," from Op. 9, to comprehend the idea underlying the "Davidsbündler Dances," and to see that the musical compositions therein embraced "are dances, which the Davidites had with the Philistines," and that, let us farther add, the separate compositions are allusions to moods caused by the conflict of the most imperative decrees of that confederacy with the actual world. As already stated, each number bears the mark either of Florestan (F) or of Eusebius (E), or of both (F and E).

The very first number is inspired by a Davidite, who certainly incited the composer to most violent dances at this time. From a motto by Clara Wieck (Op. 6, No. 5), Schumann constructs a composition which to us sounds like a most fervent hymn to womanly grace, chanted from his innermost soul. Florestan and Eusebius sing it together, neither predominating above the other, and towards the close it reaches a harmonic breadth such as no one else was capable of attaining within such narrow limits; he undoubtedly being the first to attempt such harmonic combinations as these:







Wholly contrary as they may be to the old theory of correct composition, we consider them thoroughly justifiable. The new style is formed in harmony with other laws of objective art-growth, which leave the subject ample room to unfold and develop itself. Separate parts, and so purely subjective a setting are fully warranted and necessary, being skilfully blended with the general organism;

to imitate this method, however, would be dangerous, for it must needs become a caricature.

The following number is the expression of the mood in which that hymn left Eusebius. Its sweet acerbity is admirably marked by the chord of the ninth with which the movement begins, and on which the motive is based, as well as by the peculiar polyphony with which it opens :



This polyphony is another distinctive feature of the new *technique* created by Schumann. It not only produces a fixed number of parts, but it resolves the single chord into a transparent and variegated fabric of tone.

The next number, in contrast to the preceding one, shows us Florestan's mental condition. The motive of the first movement is again taken up and the direction printed in the first edition ("rather jujube-like") affords us a key to the riddle. We find another characteristic sign of the new *technique* in this number, in the peculiar treatment and introduction of an organ-point, which more than once recurs on other intervals and in other keys :



In the next number Florestan speaks again Syncopa-  
tion assuredly never found more appropriate application  
than here, where it is used to mark the eager haste with  
which Florestan would fain burst the fetters that bind  
him :



We also find another peculiar feature of Schumann's  
style of composition at the close, which rests chiefly on the  
fifth, allowing the keynote to be but slightly apparent :





This is the most admirable mode of expressing that romantic infinity which opens a wide perspective into endless space. "It seems as if the play were over, but the curtain still up." We frequently find it in his writings in the most varied application.

Sweet images then seem to rise before the soul of Eusebius; he loses himself in contemplation of them with all the fervour of his nature, and this subtly visionary mood produces the next number (No. 5). Florestan gives way to gloomy resentment (No. 6), but the emotion of Eusebius grows ever stronger (No. 7). This number is one of the most characteristic ever written by Schumann. The harmony has acquired a peculiarly melodic shape. The separate chords are distinctly marked, but they are bound together in as strong melodic fashion as if each were but a single note; and where an individual melody is introduced, the underlying chords follow in such close alliance with the melodic features, that the whole sounds soft and sweet in spite of all its harmonic fulness.

Thus, with dramatic animation, the master wove the romance of his heart into music. Florestan again steps forth (No. 8), Eusebius seems to have inspired him to fresh, hopeful action; but as he closed, "there was a painful quiver about his lips" (No. 9), and then a dismal ballad, doubtless the ballad "of two who might never meet," howled through his brain (No. 10), which Eusebius offsets by a far pleasanter one, with a happier ending (No. 11), this calling out an outburst of saucy wit (No. 12) from Florestan, in which Eusebius also joins (No. 13). Amidst wild mirth that seizes upon them both, we seem to hear distant wedding bells:



This changes to the highest bliss, which finds farther expression in the following numbers. No. 14 is the necessary sequence to Nos. 1 and 7, and produces the next (No. 15), in which Florestan and Eusebius are again united, as in the connected numbers which succeed (Nos. 16 and 17). In the latter we find an echo of the second, and “moreover Eusebius thought the next one (No. 18) superfluous, but at the same time great happiness beamed from his eyes.” In this last number the wonderful harmony and particularly the peculiar introduction of an organ-point already mentioned, are worthy of note. This work is therefore to be regarded as the first perfect fruit of the new school. What Beethoven indicated in his last works, Schumann had now begun to execute in great and glorious fashion, and with marked success. In doing this he did not follow after Beethoven, but quite naturally after that master who first plainly defined the means and forms by which music might be made to express an isolated individual emotion—Franz Schubert.

This master also made the largest application of deep and fervent spiritual experience and luxuriant wealth of sentiment to instrumental forms, in which the spirit can reveal itself far more fully than in vocal forms. In so doing, many characteristics of his soul, many images of his fancy, were evolved for which the poet’s text failed to find

adequate expression, and thus he was necessarily led to write instrumental music. But here he was still unable to reach that objective conception which is an indispensable requisite in instrumental music. In writing songs the words became formal bonds to him, which restrained his fancy; in the instrumental realm his imagination moved freely and unfettered in a truly sensuous revelry with charming harmonies, melodies, and the captivating effects of sound. He could not therefore find the new instrumental style invented by Schumann, because he did not provide his fancy betimes with a concrete background upon which to concentrate and school itself. Schubert's instrumental music invariably seems influenced and affected by the song. Schumann's instrumental compositions are "fancy pieces," and first find firm footing upon the ground in which the new instrumental work of art is rooted. His imagination was fired by an event or a distinct incident of external life, distinct ideas produced tone-pictures in his mind, and they could only acquire salient form instrumentally. But to give them this form he required a system of *technique*, new in a certain sense and yet developed from the old system, and this he created for himself, as we have seen, by untiring industry, possibly lightened by the fact that he had very little scholastic knowledge to forget or to unlearn.

Of the works composed in 1837 and 1838, the "Phantasiestücke" (Op. 12, 1837), the "Kinderscenen" (Op. 15, 1838), and also the "Kreisleriana" (Op. 16, 1838), are particularly characteristic and monumental achievements. The moods in which they originated are common to all men, and however much of genuinely Schumannian desire and dreaming may be mingled with them, we need no special commentary and no given hypothesis to feel each separate trait. The first number of the "Phantasie-



stücke," "Des Abends," is woven as if from evening mists, from Goethe's lines:—

"When round the green-girt meadow  
Balm the tepid winds exhale,  
Then in fragrance and in shadow  
Twilight spreads her misty veil:  
Whispers peace in accents cheery,  
Rocks the heart in childhood's play,  
And upon these eyelids weary  
Shuts the golden gates of day."

"Faust," second part, act i.

(Bayard Taylor's translation.)

And the first number in the second book leads us out into the sweet chill air of night. The titles of the other numbers, "Aufschwung," "Grillen," and "Traumeswirren," are equally apt and self-evident; even those called "Warum," "Fabel," and "Ende vom Liede," leave scarcely a doubt as to their meaning. "Warum" is a mute lament over the inadequacy of all knowledge, and to experience the truth of "Fabel" we need no particular fable for our premises. Finally, in the last piece we learn that the "Ende vom Liede," which began with so much "good humour," is now quietly resigned to its fate.

No less clear are the "Kinderscenen." The master has been often and most unjustly reproached for his choice of titles, particularly in this work. We have tried to prove that if instrumental work is not to be lost in futile sporting with effects of sound, it must rest upon definite objects, and this seems especially necessary in the case of Schumann, whose imagination had had less formal training than most. Only those destitute of reason can blame him for showing us his shaping process by these titles, for thus granting us a glimpse of the secret workshop of his soul, in the hope of aiding our comprehension of the composition; for of course these titles claim no broader significance.

“People are certainly mistaken,” he says himself, “if they suppose that the composer puts pen to paper with the paltry purpose of expressing, painting, or depicting this thing or that. The main point is, is the music anything in itself, without text or explanation, and above all, is its spirit innate?”

The above-mentioned compositions fulfil this requirement to a rare degree. We have called them a thank-offering to his earliest youth under the paternal roof. He dreams that he has returned to that happy time, when his individuality took deep root, and he contrives to show us the purity and undisturbed transparency of the child's soul with unusual delicacy and truth. It is like a polished glass in which the various emotions of the tale “Von fremden Ländern und Menschen,” of the “Curiosen Geschichte,” “Glück,” “Wichtigen Begebenheit,” “Am Camin,” &c., are reflected. A blissful calm pervades the whole composition, a calm that seems doubly attractive in the restless, eager, wildly-agitated Schumann. Everything is as smooth, the dissonances all as softly blended, as if a child had actually poured forth his pure soul. And how attractive is the close, in which “the poet speaks,” or rather, “grown devout again,” moves his lips in silent prayer.

What a different aspect the master wears in “Kreisleriana.” It is not to be supposed that this work is directly connected with that bearing the same name by E. T. A. Hoffmann. As in the latter, the career of the strange music-director Kreisler is told in all its joy and sorrow, so here Schumann puts a part of his own life into his work; it is, therefore, of purely subjective nature, but the allusions to his innermost being are put into easily intelligible form. The emotions described are not drawn from particular incidents, as is probably the case in

“Novelettes” (Op. 21, 1838),<sup>1</sup> but they are of more general nature, being based upon the supreme essence of romantic emotion.

Polished and severely characteristic of Schumann as even the beginning may seem in its retarded, syncopated bass, and fully as the rest of the work may seem to be the result of his peculiar mode of expressing emotion, yet this composition also attains to objective truth in its conception and execution. The various moods stand in such strong contrast one with the other, that they mutually heighten and illustrate each other, and new light is again thrown upon each, from the point of both form and idea, by interludes and intermezzi, by episodic and contrasted passages. The various numbers do not, indeed, display the strictly organic evolution of the rondo-form—their ethical meaning is too variegated and too highly coloured—but still they have the vigorous terseness of that form.

The same opinion may be pronounced in regard to two other works of the same year, the “Arabesque” (Op. 18, 1838), and the “Blumenstück” (Op. 19, 1839), while the “Humoresque” (Op. 20, 1839), on the contrary, as well as the “Novelettes” (Op. 21), apparently require for their comprehension a knowledge of events which we do not possess, and which would be difficult of attainment. The “Humoresque” carries us at once to the very heart of the composer’s mood, by a chord which presupposes another:

<sup>1</sup> No. 3 Intermezzo appeared in May, 1838, in a “Collection of Old and New Music,” a supplement to the “New Journal of Music” (vol. ii.), with the motto from Macbeth:—

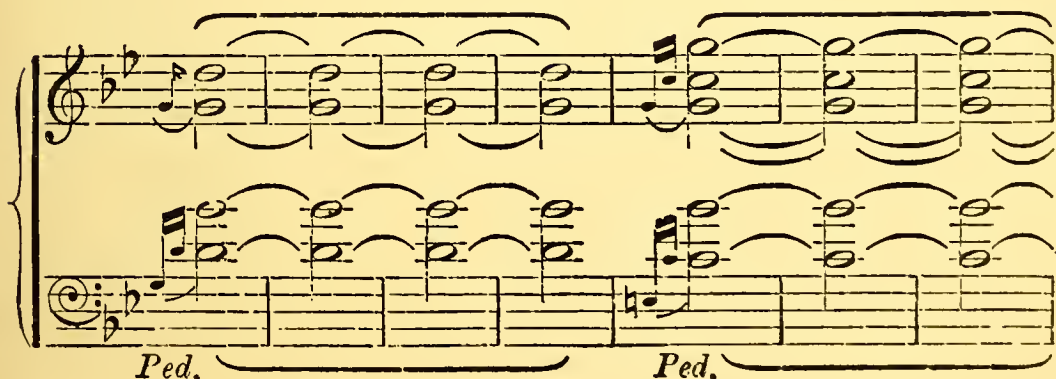
“When shall we three meet again,  
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?”

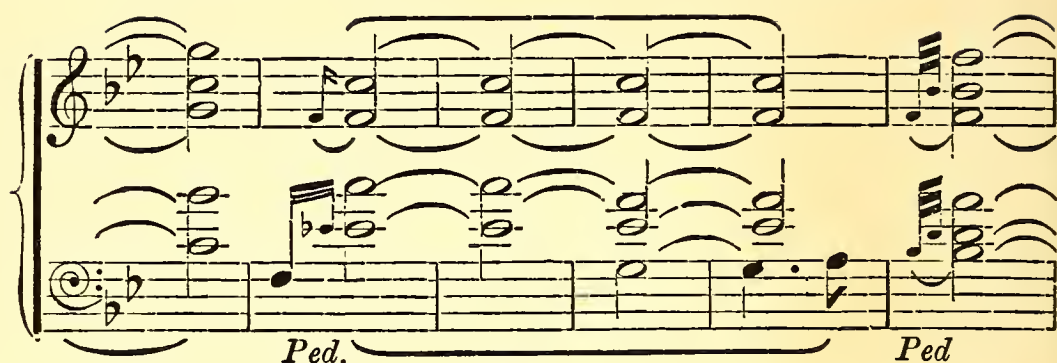




and as the work proceeds, we see that this is a serious occasion which the master regards humorously, flooding it with the magic of wit and fancy, that it may shine out in a poetic light; but all this cannot atone to us for the missing unity of form; it cannot combine the separate and well-executed pictures into a whole. Schumann does indeed attempt to establish a connection by a constant recurrence to individual motives, but this only makes the general impression more evident. The detached pictures are too elaborately finished to allow their intrinsic relations to be made clear by so purely external a method, or by the separate titles. We cannot quite say the same of the "Novelettes" and the "Faschingsschwank aus Wien" (Op. 26, 1839), written at nearly the same time. It is hard to recognize the outward influences at work in the "Faschingsschwank," certain emotions being even expressed in the firmly-fixed forms of the "Romance,"

“Scherzino,” and “Finale in Rondo form.” In the “Novelettes” the composer’s own personality is again displayed in its pristine simplicity; we have long known it and found it attractive, and it helps to produce unity. But even this personality is far more truthfully and clearly given in those works in which Schumann subjected form to his desire to infuse a meaning into it, than it is here, where he wishes to put into music moods which require words to make them wholly intelligible. This composition, therefore, forms an important boundary line in Schumann’s progress, not only by its Opus number, but also by its thoroughly characteristic contents. One of his next works (Op. 24) contains his first songs. We have taken frequent occasion to point out the powerful influence which the study of vocal music exercised upon Schumann’s development, and more especially the great change in his instrumental style which it entailed. Before turning to consider this new phase, let us draw attention to a passage in the “Humoresque,” which forms another distinguishing feature of the new piano style:






Schumann himself makes the following interesting allusion to the peculiar nature of this mode of writing in a letter to Moscheles (Sept. 22, 1837): "You must pardon many things in my manner of setting down the notes," he says; "I really did not know how to write the three

A's above each other:  or  produces a

different effect; the high A's should only create a faint lingering echo, and so I could not think of any way to

write it but ." This strange method of notation

springs from the effort to win novel effects from the piano, such as we have already seen in the preface to the "Studies" (Op. 3), an effort of decisive importance to the whole *romantic* school, which devoted so much thought and attentive study to obtaining especial qualities of tone. Schumann especially attained most marvellous effects from this way of writing in certain of his piano accompaniments to songs.



## CHAPTER IV.

## BETROTHAL. SONGS.

AS we have already hinted, Schumann's struggle to win Clara, dating from the year 1836, had a large share in those of his works which were written during that period. In January, 1836, his relations with Ernestine, which had grown constantly less intimate, wholly ceased, and when he lost his mother (Feb. 4), he felt more strongly drawn to that noble woman who had already gained such profound and lasting power over his entire mind and soul. It is well known that the two hearts soon contrived to form an indissoluble bond, and also that the lady's father showed a stubborn opposition to the marriage.

The year passed amid grief and sorrow, and towards its close the prospect grew so dark that Schumann made the following confession to his sister-in-law, Theresa, in the postscript to a letter dated Nov. 15: "Clara loves me as fondly as ever; yet I have resigned her for ever."

The future looked brighter to him again the next year, and in September, 1837, he asked Friedrich Wieck to give him his beloved daughter's hand; his offer was, however, refused, "because," as he writes to Theresa (Dec. 15, 1837), "the old man is not yet willing to give up Clara, to whom he clings most closely. And then," he adds, "he is not altogether wrong in thinking that we ought to earn something more first, if we mean to live respectably."

This latter point of view, from which all his work must also be considered, seems first to have been made clear and worthy of his consideration by Wieck's opposition to his marriage with Clara. Hitherto he had worked and written merely in the service of high art and of those ideas which had become the guiding principle of his life, not only regardless of material results, but often also at the cost of large pecuniary sacrifices. Now the serious import of life became fully apparent to him. He must bend all his efforts towards reaching what was now his highest aim, union with the beloved woman, by increased industry and a new conception of his work, and he found himself ready for the task. He eagerly set about executing the plan which had occurred to him in 1836, for removal to Vienna, hoping to find a broader sphere of action in that larger city than Leipsic could offer him.

He had hitherto paid but little heed to the opportunities for work afforded by Leipsic. The brisk musical intercourse which he himself had done so much to promote by founding the "New Journal of Music," and which gained fresh and unexpected impetus from Mendelssohn's arrival and settlement in Leipsic in September, 1835, had hitherto been all that he had cared to require from the public life in Leipsic, so far as he himself was concerned. His personal intercourse with Mendelssohn and those brilliant artists who soon gathered round that great master of the nineteenth century, such as Ignaz Moscheles and Ferdinand David, as well as with those who only occasionally visited Leipsic, like Friedrich Chopin, Ludwig Berger, Ferdinand Hiller, &c., was used only as a means to promote his own mental and spiritual growth, and it is characteristic enough of him that as soon as it was important that he should think more of the outward life, he instantly decided to make a complete change in his outward relations. He

wrote from Vienna (October 10, 1838): "If I may not stay here, I am resolved to go to Paris or London. I will not return to Leipsic." But a few weeks later, life in Vienna began to seem somewhat unprofitable. "Believe me, Theresa," he says, in a letter of Dec. 18, 1836, "if it depended upon myself alone, I would go back to Leipsic to-morrow. Leipsic is not so small a place as I imagined. People gabble and gossip here quite as much as they did in Zwickau." In fact, his scheme for moving to Vienna was largely inspired by the idea that "the Journal might be made broader and more influential, and might become the medium of communication between north and south."

At the first glance we must consider it strange that Schumann, who as we know had written excellent things, should find no stronger support from the publishers, who are more numerous in Leipsic than anywhere. But publishers judge and pay in proportion to success, and just now Schumann's success was very limited. Then, as always, critics spent most of their time in praising the merits of the old masters in new phrases, while they patronized domestic mediocrity; Schumann's wares were as yet unintelligible and distasteful to the majority of the public, and it was therefore quite natural that he should write to Moscheles (March 8, 1836), "the publishers won't listen to me."

His plan for moving to Vienna having been thoroughly discussed in a series of letters to Johann Fischhof (died June 28, 1837), the well-known professor of the Vienna Conservatorium of Music, in whom Schumann found the most faithful of friends, our hero set out for that city in September, 1838, hoping to bring out his Journal there on the 1st of January, 1839. But the difficulties in the way of this enterprise were overwhelming, and he returned to Leipsic in April, 1839, no richer than he went, save in



mental treasures. Life in Vienna, as he himself said, first fully revealed Franz Schubert to him.

His visit to Vienna was made peculiarly important by the fact of his obtaining a number of unpublished manuscripts from Schubert's brother, which he printed at his own expense. Among them was the great symphony in C major, which he instantly sent to Mendelssohn, under whose direction it was performed at the Gewandhaus, Dec. 12, 1839.

On his return he set eagerly to work to make a home for himself. He soon received the degree of Doctor of Philosophy,<sup>1</sup> and as Clara's father still refused his consent to their marriage, nothing was left for him but to obtain the consent of the law, in virtue of which the pair were joined by the blessing of the church, on Sept. 12, 1840, in the church at Schönefeld, a village near Leipsic. A rich

<sup>1</sup> "And now one confidential request. I know no one wiser or more kindly disposed than you, to whom I can apply," he writes to Professor Keferstein at Jena, Jan. 31, 1840. "But promise me, most honoured friend, that you will tell no one. You, perhaps, know that Clara is my betrothed; her high rank as an artist has often led me to consider my own humble position, and although I know how modest she is, and that she loves me simply as a man and a musician, still I think it would please her to have me seek a higher position in the civic sense of the word. Let me ask you: is it very hard to get a doctor's degree at Jena? Should I have to pass an examination, and what would it be? To whom should I apply? Would not my position as editor of a paper of seven years' standing, my rank as a composer, and my honest toil, help me to gain that dignity? Give me your most candid opinion, and grant my request to observe strict silence in the matter for the present." Keferstein bestirred himself in his friend's behalf, and on the 29th of February, 1840, Schumann was enabled to write to him: "Everything combined to fill the measure of my joy. The eulogy is so glorious that I certainly owe you a share of my thanks for it. It gave me and my friends most sincere pleasure. The first thing I did was, of course, to send a copy into the north, to a girl who is still a child, and will dance with glee at the idea that she is engaged to a doctor."

new love-life now dawned for Schumann, inspiring a series of most exquisite compositions, which followed in logical sequence those of the tedious and painful period of courtship.

We have already made frequent allusion to the influence which those weary months exerted over his piano compositions, and have shown in those works last considered the mighty struggle to find that undoubted directness of expressing an emotion which instrumental music is incapable of giving, words being requisite for such a purpose. This necessity led to his writing a series of songs in 1840, which not only made him popular at once, but which were also destined to win him a wholly new rank in the history of musical art.

We need hardly say that Schumann's idea of song-writing was very different and very much deeper than that of the generality of popular song-writers, who merely seek for melodies suited to certain ballads, at most adapting them to the inherent mood. Like the common people of old in their ardent desire for production, so he too would only re-echo such things as moved him to sorrow or to mirth, and, like all great masters of song, he tried to imitate in tones the feelings aroused in him by the poet's words. He tried to grasp the poet's emotion more closely, to reproduce it in new artistic shape, with all its more delicate lights and shades, such as mere speech can never express.

We have elsewhere<sup>1</sup> attempted to show how the typical form of the ballad became fixed in the fifteenth century, and how the artists of that era strove to impress it with a higher personal truth by means of a bolder and richer structure. We have also shown how a new source of song

<sup>1</sup> "History of German Song," Berlin, J. Guttentag (D. Collin), 1874.

was opened up by Goethe, instantly exerting a quickening and fertilizing influence upon music.

Two masters especially attempted the musical regeneration of Goethe's songs, Johann Friedrich Reichardt (1751-1814) and Carl Friedrich Zelter (1758-1832), but superficially only, gathering scarcely more than its own verbal melody from the song.

Two other artists from Berlin, Ludwig Berger (1777-1839) and Bernhard Klein (1794-1832), then tried a more complete mode of treatment, one more adequate to the real essence of the song, but they too failed to obtain an exhaustive musical representation of Goethe's verses. This was first realized by the two great masters Beethoven and Mozart, but only as they expanded the original form of the song, both instrumentally and vocally, into the more dramatically important *scena*. They, indeed, managed to reproduce the individual features of the lyric mood, but by considering it in its broadest dimensions they lost the pregnancy of the lyric expression. Song rather requires the tracing back of the emotion it expresses to its earliest origin, if it is to attain the most concise and striking expression. It is only because they fulfil this requirement that Goethe and Heine are the greatest of lyric poets, and Schubert, Mendelssohn, and Schumann the greatest of song-writers.

Schubert goes directly back to the original terse form of the song. The characteristic features of that form, the division into strophes and the scansion entailed by the rhyme, also influence the musical construction. The architectural theory of the song, which can only be indicated in the text by the regular rhythm and the rhyme, is first perfected by the music. As Schubert endows the concise form thus acquired with all the wealth of the song expanded into a *scena*, he gains the deepest and most exhaustive expression



of which the *scena* is capable in the genuine lyric form. He hazards the most distant modulations in these bonds of form, but always in the attempt to give truer and more profound expression to the original form by a richer dress.

From this point of view Schumann is directly allied to Schubert. As the latter entered into close relations with the greatest master of antique lyric poetry, Goethe, so did Schumann with the greatest lyric poet of modern times, Heinrich Heine, and this position towards their poets at once marks the deep difference between these two kindred artist-souls.

Schubert himself set forth a peculiar feature of Heine's lyric poetry in his more recitative-like songs. Heine's first appearance in print occurred but shortly before the death of Schubert, who was therefore able to trace a distinct plan and motive for very few songs of the newest song-spring which began in the realm of music with that poet. These comprise those poems published by Heine in his "Swan Songs."

Heine's lyric poetry is even richer in genuine meaning than that of Goethe. He seizes the mood more accurately, condenses it into fewer lines, each word being even more weighty than with Goethe, and his verses are therefore fuller of significance for the musician. Schubert reproduced his various emotions with even greater fidelity than those of other poets in earlier songs, and thus achieved that more recitative-like form which we find rounded into soft melodic outline in "Am Meer;" it is strongly marked in "Die Stadt," and even more so in "Der Doppelgänger." It then devolves upon the piano accompaniment to condense and concentrate into musical unity the emotion which is to be expressed.

As the words merely suggest the farther action, laying

stress on the chief incidents only by way of explanation, so too the music accents only the detached high lights, which the piano accompaniment then condenses into unity. All the tragedy of the underlying sentiment finds affecting expression in this accompaniment. But this tragedy is simply one side of Heine's poetry, the other remains untouched by this song-style. Schumann was the first to comprehend the whole of Heine's nature, because like that poet he held himself aloof from the fluctuations of his emotion, governing it and freeing himself from its power, and thus attaining that standpoint which the romantic school, imperfectly enough, calls the ironical.

Heinrich Heine expresses not alone the culmination, but also the solution of romanticism, which had long since been lost in the mazes of fantasy. The romantic school, with subjective arbitrariness, constructed a world of its own, which was, in its direct opposition to the actual world, a mere fabric of dissolving cloud-images. The men of this school declared the whole external world to be idle and vain, and turned it into sport for the sovereign "I;" Heine drew the final conclusion when he asserted the "I" itself to be utterly futile. All the borrowed apparatus of romanticism, fairies and nixies, ghosts and marble corpses, coffins and shrouds, was conjured up again by him, only to be thrown ruthlessly aside. His heartstrings therefore vibrate in richer, fuller chords and melodies than those of any of his predecessors save Goethe; but they vibrate all the more pathetically that they are seldom so purely attuned as in the latter case.

In Schubert's hands only the pensive, divine fervour of Heine's verse is awakened to life, without the sceptic desolation. Schubert assumes the same pure stand in regard to Heine that we see in the case of Goethe and Wilhelm Müller. He displays the same eager absorption in Heine's

verse as in the case of Goethe, and the greater brevity and pregnancy of the former only inspire him to follow the form more exactly, and to reproduce the expressions of the text with greater accuracy. He is far too much under the sway of his own overflowing soul to admit of his reaching the ironical standpoint. Schumann's entire course of education, on the contrary, led him directly up to it. This standpoint is a necessity of the romantic school. We find him exclusively occupied, for many years, with piano compositions, eagerly occupied in sketching and completing distinct pictures in tones. He tried to see himself in an objective form, and reconstructed ideas and images in his imagination by the help of reflection, then first to infuse his own feelings and emotions into them.

This method of production is, however, in perfect correspondence with that of the romanticists, and it was therefore easy for him to reach the proper standpoint in regard to Heine. He borrowed his recitative-like form directly from Schubert, but carried it so much farther that his songs are essentially different from all other versions of Heine's poetry, far excelling Schubert. In the latter's setting, the pianoforte accompaniment is essential to complete the strophic form of the song. Schumann, on the contrary, modifies the accent melodically, so that each separate strophe is marked rather by this modification than by distinct melodic features. The recitative style of song, which adheres closely to the words, thus acquires a far more artistic presentation of the song-form through the voice, as well as the instrumental part of the work.

This criticism does not hold good for the first cycle of Heine's songs, published by Schumann as "*Liederkreis von Heinrich Heine*" (Op. 24, 1840), or the following cycle, dedicated to his betrothed, "*Myrthen*" (Op. 25, 1840). The songs in the first set, "*Morgens steh' ich auf*



und frage," "Es treibt mich hin," "Ich wandelte unter den Bäumen," "Lieb' Liebchen, leg's Händchen," "Schöne Wiege meiner Leiden," "Warte, Warte, wilder Schiffsmann," "Berg und Burgen schau'n herunter," "Anfangs wollt' ich fast verzagen," "Mit Myrthen und Rosen," bespeak a feverishly excited emotion with all the magical power of language of which his deeply agitated heart was capable, without any secondary ideas. They therefore afford but little room for a treatment essentially different from that of Schubert, although Schumann has indeed handled certain of them, such as "Schöne Wiege meiner Leiden," and "Mit Myrthen und Rosen," with even greater tenderness and earnestness than Schubert showed in his versions of Heine.

In the collection of songs by this poet next published, we find still less deviation from the conventional form or idea. The lyrics, "Die Lotosblume ängstigt," "Was will die einsame Thräne," and "Du bist wie eine Blume," are sung with all the deep reverential fervour hitherto shown by Schubert alone, and they are among the most perfect things ever done in the realm of song, in their enchanting truth and delicacy of sentiment. Exquisite and minute analysis of the innermost intricacies of emotion as the master displays in certain of them, as "Schöne Wiege meiner Leiden," and "Mit Myrthen und Rosen," unconscious as he himself may be of the word-painting, he never loses sight of the ruling emotion, being so fully pervaded by it that he never forgets its individual features.

The new ironical standpoint from which he grasped the tragic force of the sentiment, was first attained by him in Heine's song-cycle "Dichterliebe" (Op. 48, composed in 1840, published in 1844). It is dedicated to Madame Schröder-Devrient, a very notable fact to those who know

how matchless was that celebrated singer's rendering of the more recitative-like class of songs.

The songs in this collection, from their melodic construction, are the first perfect examples of that style which we have already striven to characterize. Every one of them requires a careful declamation such as was never attempted either before or after Schumann's day, and they are worked out, not in the recitative form usual with Schubert, but into a thoroughly concise, strophic verse-structure. The separate accents are so delicately graded that, although they fail to rise to absolute melody, they combine into definite forms in their connected action. The text would scarcely admit of any other treatment. The wealth of emotion is only superficially indicated, but not pursued farther, that task being naturally and successfully left to the pianoforte accompaniment. Schumann has often been reproached for this treatment, and yet it is the only correct one for the songs of Heine, which usually begin in the full flood of feeling, so that an elaborate prelude is necessary to show those premises concerning which the poet is silent; or else, as in the songs, "Im wunderschönen Monat Mai," "Ich will meine Seele tauchen," "Das ist ein Flöten und Geigen," and "Am leuchtenden Sommermorgen," we must begin with chords if we would follow the poet's mood, chords which, beginning no series in the original process of harmony, but presupposing others, also plunge us into the midmost emotion.

Moreover, the poet is apt to open such wide perspectives in his closing lines, that the musician who aspires to reproduce the poet's every sensation is forced to use lengthy postludes. Such instances in the cycle to which we have referred are, "Ich will meine Seele tauchen," "Das ist ein Flöten und Geigen," "Im Rhein, im heiligen Strom," "Und wüßten's die Blumen, die kleinen," "Hör' ich ein Liedchen

klingen," "Ein Jüngling liebt ein Mädchen," "Am leuchtenden Sommermorgen," "Aus alten Mährchen winkt es," and "Die alten bösen Lieder," and in these postludes even more markedly than in his preludes Schumann shows such a mastery of expression, he sinks himself in the poet's intention with such loving devotion, that the latter is thus first made a living presence to us. It is of course an *instrumental* depth of lyric expression, but still it is of a different nature, and proceeds from different premises from that which we find in Beethoven's songs, "An die ferne Geliebte," or the "Six Songs by Goethe," in Op. 75. Beethoven also observed the strophic construction of verse in these songs, although he did but little to raise it to a higher degree of musical significance and refinement. He composed the melodies to these poems under the idea underlying them all, rather than under the sway of that melody of speech or that emotion from which they sprang, and he then expanded the song instrumentally alone. The melody of the first stanza is retained in all the rest, but the piano accompaniment is varied with this repetition, as seems a necessary requirement of the instrument. The genuine song-form is here elaborated instrumentally as the dominant idea is in the adagio of a symphony or sonata. In the first stanza Beethoven condenses the ideal meaning of the entire song into a single musical thought, giving himself up to it with sensuous delight in the abundance of his instrumental media, and giving it fresh meaning instrumentally with every new stanza, as in the song, "Kennst du das Land?" or "Was zieht mir das Herz so, was zieht mich hinaus?" Here the instrumental becomes the most effective medium for the representation of the lyric mood. But it is only in the first stanza that instrument and voice stand in the proper relation to each other; in the other verses the instrumental part acquires



dimensions which completely overshadow the vocal part, and the effect is consequently often lessened. Beethoven here seeks to find ever richer instrumental expression for an abstract of emotion already attained and fully expressed vocally.

The case is quite different with the instrumental expansion found in Schumann's works. Vocally, Heine's songs are quite inexhaustible, and so Schumann strove to work out instrumentally and quite independently that which was only hinted in the vocal part. The piano accompaniment, of course, gains a predominance over the voice which it has not in Schubert's works. While with him a melody independently elaborated is combined with a piano accompaniment treated with the utmost freedom, to express a common thought, the vocal part in the above-mentioned songs by Schumann is assuredly the mere skeleton into which the piano accompaniment first breathes the breath of life. Usually, to be sure, the most perfect song-structure is gained by Schubert's method; but these Heine songs from their exceptional position necessitated the altered manner of Schumann. At the same time, he does not allow the vocal part to be overshadowed by the rich instrumental part, but only uses the latter to set the former in stronger relief. Being condensed into a distinct verse-structure, the vocal part appears thoroughly plastic in contrast with the accompaniment, which is resolved into transparent figure-work. When this verse-structure is less succinctly worked out, as in the soul-stirring song, "Ich grolle nicht," the accompaniment also abandons its especial domain and supports the accents which are worked up to affecting power, with a mighty harmony. In all the other songs, the accompaniment reaches a high degree of independence; in certain cases, as in "Das ist ein Flöten und Geigen," this is so marked that the accompaniment speaks for itself

when separated from the song, and, as we think, quite correctly. Even the most tender and intense of melodies, could such be found for the text, could never have interpreted that which lies behind them. Schumann therefore sung his melody in the approved fashion, and the pianoforte accompaniment undertook to give the picture of the wedding dance as it lived in the imagination of the poet and inspired his verse.

Schumann strove not only to recreate the lyrics of Heinrich Heine, but also those of other poetic individualities like Justinus Kerner, Friedrich Rückert, Joseph Baron von Eichendorff, Adalbert von Chamisso, Emanuel Geibel, Robert Reinick, Lord Byron, Robert Burns, and even Wolfgang von Goethe.

Although perhaps Kerner had most to offer that was akin to the genius of Schumann—the deep traces of pain as well as the boundless yearning for the spiritual in Kerner's songs are so closely allied to Schumann that he found most striking musical expression for both—still this poet did not inspire any distinct song-style, the poet's own individuality not being sufficiently marked in that direction. Fresh, natural feeling, cast in truly popular form, alternate in him with dreamy, magical phantasms, expressed by the aid of artificial apparatus adapted with romantic refinement, Schumann being so captivated by both these moods that he is nowhere able to rise superior to them and to reconcile the two. In him, too, in the songs of the "Liederreihe" (Op. 35, composed in 1840), we find a popular truth of sentiment side by side with romantic refinement, and, being unable to lend any distinct features to the poet's personality taken as a whole, he gives us a uniform miniature painting of emotion only in No. 4, "Erstes Grün," and No. 9, "Stille Liebe;" the well-known traveller's song, "Wohlauf noch

getrunken," being incomparably fresher in idea than in execution.

His relations with Friedrich Rückert were far less advantageous. To the splendid tints in which this poet's muse is arrayed, and the infinite number of tones and forms which his verse assumes, a certain spice of unity can only be added by skill in handling language and versification, but this evidently embarrassed Schumann. He can only give a clear and distinct impress to the verbal verse-structure when, as in Heine's works, he finds a significant meaning compressed into the narrowest limits. Rückert's versification often conceals a lack of meaning and warmth of feeling. Schumann could not, therefore, gain any definite standpoint in regard to this poet. He sang certain of his lines, as those published in Op. 25 "Du, meine Seele, du, mein Herz," with all the tenderness, sweetness, and overflowing wealth of his own genius, and so, too, many of the poems taken from the "Liebesfrühling," which he published in conjunction with his wife (Op. 37, comp. 1840), are full of feeling and delicate in execution, as, for instance, the very first number, "Der Himmel hat eine Thräne geweint;" but the verbal wealth and the breadth and easy contentment, which leave the poet little room for anything more than a cheerful and meditative reflection, are apt to clog the melodic flight and rhythmic strength to such a degree that the sentiment almost invariably reaches us fragmentarily, as if uttered by fits and starts, and by sheer force of will. At all events, the simpler fashion in which Clara regarded her task harmonizes far better with the text than the more interpretative method of Schumann. The two graceful songs, "Liebst du um Schönheit" (No. 4), and "Warum willst du And're fragen" (No. 11), in which she casts the inherent emotion in a simple, thoughtful, and appropriate



form, are hers. Where she tries to lend a deeper meaning to the text, as in the song, "Er ist gekommen" (No. 2), she, too, loses herself in incongruities.

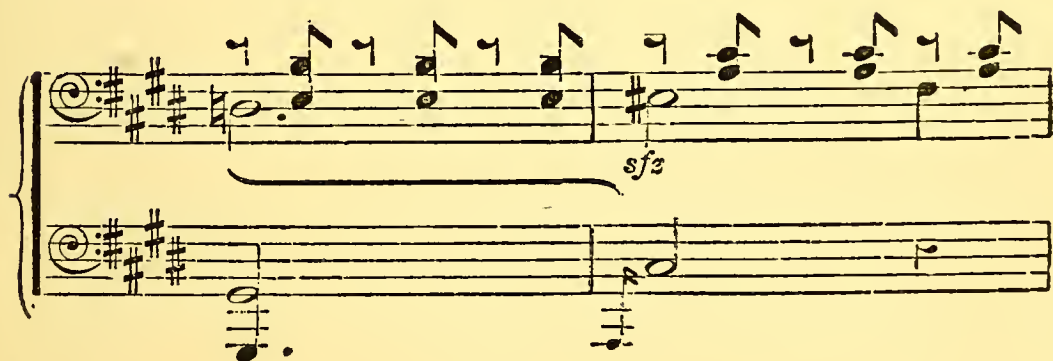
In Joseph Baron von Eichendorff, Schumann again encounters a kindred spirit. The narrow tendency of this poet, who improvised his songs from the sacred traditions of the romantic world, must have exercised a peculiar power of attraction over our master, not so much from its likeness to his own nature as because it afforded his fancy a fertile field for musical manufacture. No distinct feeling is ever directly manifested in Eichendorff's songs, but emotion is expressed by means of the entire apparatus of modern romanticism. Woodland airs and forest solitudes, rustling branches and the mysterious beauty of the myrtle tree, dreamy night, the glittering stars, and the magical music of fairy tales which fills forest and field, translate his emotion, for the reproduction of which Schumann found a truly luxurious abundance of tones and tints. He loved to be stirred by this poetical wonder-world, and in his endeavour to adorn the original picture with the richest arabesques, and to give it full explanation in fancy, he became the true musical interpreter of the songs of this romantic meditation.

The pianoforte accompaniment is even more carefully considered than in the songs of Heine. The harmonic basis, which is composed of softer, less dissonant chords, is dissolved into far broader and more sonorous figure-work, or displayed in more rhythmically vivacious style by the delicate application of syncopation, thus forming a striking prelude to the introduction of certain notes foreign to the harmony, which weave the various parts into an enchanting web. By this same peculiar method, frequently developed by means of two chords quite logically introduced, and also by adding a part quite foreign

to this progression, directing the modulation in another direction, he gains a singularly appropriate effect, as in the postlude to "Schöne Wiege meiner Leiden," where the most simple succession of harmonies :



transformed in this way, becomes one of the oddest and most ingenious of harmonic combinations :



The melody naturally shows many signs of carelessness in consequence of this struggle after brilliant musical effect. It even assumes something of the soft tone of the pianoforte accompaniment, thus becoming more intense

than is the case with many of the Heine songs, but the want of a distinct object for the emotion in the text impedes the vigorous elaboration of the verse-structure, and in certain passages the melody is lost in a vague groping, amid which the declamation scarcely serves as guide. The ballad form is plainly marked in the melody of but four numbers in the "Liederkreis," by von Eichendorff (Op. 39, comp. 1840), *i.e.*, "Dein Bildniss wunderselig," "Es rath und weiss es doch keiner," "Ueber'm Garten durch die Lüfte," and, more particularly, "Ich kann wol manchmal singen," which is worthy to be ranked with Schubert's beautiful short songs. In others, such as "Es war als hätte der Himmel," "Ich hör' die Bächlein rauschen," and "Es zog eine Hochzeit den Berg entlang," the master condenses the sentiment into a single phrase, like Schubert in the "Leiermann," so that one or two lines of a verse in some degree form a stanza or strophe. This style is in thorough harmony with the muse of Eichendorff; the piano accompaniment is free to follow out its most individual features to complete exhaustion, and the vocal part, although restricted, has ample justice done to it. In the other numbers of the series, especially in the "Schöne Fremde," the song merely forms the necessary explanatory note to the picture with its various outlines, which the accompaniment completes.

The master did not again have occasion to reproduce pure feeling in song until he reached the succeeding cycle, "Frauenliebe und Leben," when all the factors of musical expression, melody, harmony, and rhythm again assumed their full importance. The poet Adalbert von Chamisso from the first entered upon a world which was strange to him; but he described it with all the charming fervour and tenderness of his nature, and wrote his verses under the immediate inspiration of the sentiments of that



work. To this the musician's point of view exactly corresponded. Other musicians before Schumann—Carl Löwe, for example—were moved to set these lyrics to music, but it was reserved for the latest singer to give them thoroughly exhaustive musical treatment.

Schumann's emotions were as chaste and devout as those of any pure woman's heart, and he was so fluent in the language of tone that he also regained the art of moulding form.

He only set the first eight songs to music, and we thoroughly approve of his omitting the ninth, because, although it would have suited the setting, its more didactic tone affords but few musical moments. He treated the series as a whole, as Beethoven did his "*Liederkreis an die ferne Geliebte*," without connecting the separate songs even in the external way that the latter does. Only at the close does he give us an instrumental echo of the first song as a postlude, and this we believe to be more of a necessity than it was in the case of Beethoven, who takes up the melody of his first number in the last song of the series.

After the woman's heart "had felt the last bitter pang," and had "silently withdrawn within itself," where "its lost happiness and its world now alone exist," it was an exquisite idea, and one quite worthy of our master, to give us a glimpse of that heart by repeating the first strain of dawning rapture in the accompaniment. The psychological development of the whole work, by which the separate songs are linked together, is even finer. The voice again becomes the chief exponent of the sentiment as the organ most adequate to the direct expression of the bliss and longing of the heart. Strophe and versification also find musical representation in the melody, and that not only through the delicate gradation of the declamatory accent, but also in genuinely melodic scansion. Even in those two

numbers where the song becomes more declamatory in faithful correspondence with the sentiment and situation (Nos. 6 and 8), the melodic features are so strongly marked that it presses forward to the final rhyme with more intense urgency and greater energy, thus helping to give a faithful representation of the strophic structure in music as well as in words. The accompaniment never predominates here as it so often does in Schumann's earlier songs, nor do we find any mere painting of the outward situation but once, in the lovely bridal song, "*Helft mir ihr Schwestern freundlich mich schmücken*," where the closing ritornello repeats the first bars of the melody changed into a wedding march. In the other songs the accompaniment follows the deep, subjective character of the separate poems with that chaste reserve which never wholly reveals its innermost soul. This reserve now leads the composer to use those notes foreign to the harmony to which we have already referred, and to resolve even the fundamental harmony into a flow of melody only to be found in equal measure in Schubert.

Schumann is far too apt to think the expression too coarse, or at least over plain-spoken; a darker shade must, therefore, be added here and there, and this is generally done by means of one of those foreign notes mentioned above. The peculiar open position of the chord, and the cadence on the  $\frac{6}{4}$ -chord, are now constantly employed.

The Cradle Song (No. 7) affords the only real opportunity for a resolution of the chords into transparent figure-work:

*Fröhlich innig.*

SING-STIMME.

An mei - nem Her - zen

PIANO-FORTE.

*f p*

*Ped.*

The intense wealth of feeling displayed in the rest of the series requires for its due representation a surfeit of tone-colour only to be obtained by ample harmonic materials, which Schumann seeks to acquire not by distant modulations, but by the introduction of notes foreign to the harmony. Like Schubert in the "Winterreise," he usually confined himself to the simplest harmonic construction, submitting it to a deepening process, however, such as we do not find in Schubert, or in any of his successors.

Schubert is led to peculiar chord-structures by the melodic leading of separate parts; Schumann by the melodic tendency of the entire harmony. The very first song in "Frauenliebe und Leben" establishes the harmonic flow by means of suspensions and passing notes. But with the second song we begin to stumble upon chord-structures which even the shrewdest theorist could never deduce from statute, however democratic he might be.

Harmonic combinations such as these :



*mf*

Wan . dle, wan-dle de - ine Bah - nen nur be .

- trach - ten dei - nen Schein, nur in

*Ped.* \* *Ped.* \*

require no justification. They spring from an attempt to diminish the ponderous effect of the separate chords

without weakening them by resolution. They are meant to act concisely and energetically, but not in their original crass, conclusive fashion.

In this way Schumann became master of the dissonance as Mendelssohn is master of the consonance, though not, of course, in the idiomatic sense. Schumann but seldom introduced a dissonance for its own sake, in order to express the full tragic meaning of the sentiment in glaring discords, as in Heine's song, "Ich grolle nicht;" but he rather considered it the surest means of rendering the harmonies fusible, and imparting to the expression, by weakening its more sensuous effect, that more mystic half-light so perfectly corresponding to his chaste reserve.

This is probably the most important and characteristic feature of his art-style, and he carried it to great technical perfection, thus introducing greater subjectiveness even into the severely realistic mode of perception of a Burns or a Reinick, without detaching them from their original soil. He felt strangely drawn towards the greatest poet of Scotland, Robert Burns, although he did not study his works with the persistent assiduity displayed towards his other favourite poets. Nor was that entire absorption which Schumann loved possible in this case. With the Scotch poet the entire emotion is described so clearly, and with such realistic truth, that any farther examination of it nowhere seems necessary.

As in the case of all poets of the people, the chief effort must be to strike the characteristic note; and Schumann was less successful in doing this in his arrangements of the Scotch poet's songs for voice and piano, than in the "Songs for Mixed Voices" (Op. 55, comp. 1846). In the former, the accompaniment often tries to express separate features of the text with greater accuracy, the song thus frequently losing something of the popular note, which is always struck

with a masterly hand. This note is preserved intact in but two of these songs, "Hee balou, my sweet wee Donald" (from Op. 25) and "My Love is like a red, red rose" (from Op. 27), the accompaniment to which thoroughly corresponds to the choral movement in several parts. But even these songs are surpassed by "The Highland Lassie," "The Highland Laddie," and "I'll ay ca' in by yon toun" (from Op. 55, "Five Songs for Mixed Voices").

Probably Schumann never wrote simpler or more charming melodies, nor did he often succeed in so impressively combining his peculiar *technique* with choral effect.

His connection with Robert Reinick was much the same as with Robert Burns. Where he regarded only the primary feeling in Reinick's poems, expressing this in song without going into details, as in the favourite "O Sonnenschein" and the lively "Ständchen" (both from Op. 36, comp. 1840), he embodied his own personality in truly popular form. The other songs in this series are sketchy and mannered, because he tried to put a meaning into the poet's lines which they did not actually contain. The poet's kindly innocence became affectation, and its shadows were reflected in the fresh fountain of song. A natural and instinctive sense of the folly and futility of this attitude of the musician towards the poet seems to have withheld Schumann from any nearer approach to two poets whose lyric poems are full of musical incidents of lasting value—Emanuel Geibel and Edward Mörike.

He could not sing of love and wine in Geibel's anacreontic style. That poet's conception is too superficial, his poetry too destitute of originality and too paltry in thought for him, and the perfect form of Geibel's poems may have restrained him from making any effort to study them more closely. Where he turns to these verses, as in Op. 29, it was probably from an amiable longing to be at



work, and from the fact that they afforded him the best of opportunities to try his hand at painting situations with the *technique* of part singing, just as the three Geibel poems in the next work (Op. 30) served him as a bridge to the ballad style.

We learn how strongly he was attracted towards part singing from a letter to Keferstein (Feb. 29, 1840): "I can hardly tell you," he writes, "what a delight it is to write for the voice in comparison with composing for any instrument, and how my spirit swells and surges when I sit down to work. Entirely new ideas have dawned upon my mind; and I am also thinking of an opera, a thing which would only be possible if I could cut loose from my present position as editor."

Op. 29, "Three Poems by Geibel, for Part Singing;" Op. 33, "Four Part-Songs for Male Voices;" Op. 34, "Four Duets for Soprano and Tenor, with Pianoforte Accompaniment;" and Op. 43, "Three Duets for two Female Voices," also written in 1840, owe their origin to this new bent of his industry. It was certainly no easy task for him to adapt his *technique* to vocal compositions in a number of parts. We have seen what he did to change the new instrumental polyphony, which depends, not upon a definite number of real parts, but chiefly upon the chord and its transparent treatment. His next task was to adapt to his own uses that vocal polyphony which had been already carried to the utmost pitch of perfection by the greatest masters, and in this he was but slowly and partially successful. He was far more evidently occupied in applying his instrumental polyphony to the voice. He often reduced the apparent multiplicity of parts to a number actually smaller, doing this for extrinsic and not intrinsic reasons, as in the following passage ("Ländliches Lied," Op. 29):

Da sucht das Mä-del die ro-then Schuh

SOPRAN. { 1.  2. 

Da sucht das Mä-del die ro-then Schuh und schnürt

or he introduces a dissonance as freely as in his instrumental works. The flow of the various parts, especially in male choruses, is greatly injured in this way, the more so because it is altogether more difficult to use this style in vocal composition. Choral effect also so charmed our master that he tried to gain the sonorous quality of instrumental music regardless of everything else, and thus paved the way for great difficulties in the separate parts.

He was destined to win greater and more lasting fame in the domain of the ballad, upon which he entered in Op. 31 (comp. 1840).

Here again we may refer to our earlier statement of Schumann's great importance in the history of ballad writing.<sup>1</sup> In it we show that Carl Löwe (born 1796, died 1868) is to be considered as the true creator of the genuine ballad style; that neither Zumsteeg, Reichardt, Zelter, or even Schubert struck the real ballad note; that the first three men rather cultivated the song-like romance style, and Schubert perfectly reproduced the original poem in music, but without the especial significance of the ballad style. With him image succeeds image, but none of them is conceived with objective firmness, and they are only united by the fundamental feeling that inspired them. He carves these images so skilfully, and sets the lyric moments in relief with such striking truth, that it is doubtful if he can ever be surpassed in this particular; but he is as far as Zumsteeg, Reichardt, and Zelter from finding the right tone for a genuinely epic narrative, so

<sup>1</sup> "History of German Song" (Berlin, 1874), p. 262.

that the music often delays the simple, natural course of the story, and at last becomes tedious. Löwe was the first to combine all the wearisome details into one concrete picture. Reichardt and Zelter, after the fashion of the epic folk-song, paid little or no regard to the action, and Schubert and Zumsteeg lost the simple form of the narrative in their efforts to develop the action also, in music. Löwe was the first to combine the two things, and he did it in the easiest and most natural way. He condensed into one, or at most two lines, the romance tone which is more adapted to the popular taste, and which is in its popular form expanded into an entire verse-structure, and in this way he found the tone most appropriate to a narrative increased into an epic. This more rhetorical, but wholly complete melodic phrase forms the keynote which, modified melodically as well as rhythmically and harmonically in the course of the action, decides the importance and also the execution of the various parts, pervading the whole ballad as the refrain does the folk-song, or still more accurately, as the keynote of the verbal melody does the narrative. At the same time this treatment gives the pianoforte accompaniment the ample scope required by this form. The accompaniment begins to take an active part in portraying the real elements of the ballad.

Such are the principles of the new form as established by Löwe, and Schumann also adopted them when he applied himself to the ballad form. Certain of the Eichen-dorff songs even, such as "Es war als hätt' der Himmel," are evolved from a single vocal phrase, and this mode of construction helped him to continue the ballad in Löwe's spirit. His own individuality, as well as the course of his growth, led him to this field of labour, and enabled him to accomplish valuable results. We recognized as the strongest characteristic of his individuality, his fancy for



working under the influence of definite, outward events, and for making them the objects to be represented in his creations. His instrumental compositions are based upon such incidents, and in his songs he incorporated actual situations and circumstances as far as the lyric mood would permit, thus gaining the only possible point of view from which the ballad could be composed, the chief aim of the ballad being also to depict the facts which underlie it. Schumann's singular position towards his predecessor is the sole and simple explanation of his variation from the form fixed by Löwe. When he was attracted to write ballads, outward events were still only valuable to him as suggestions, and his imagination so completely transformed them that they almost wholly lost their connection with the actual world. Thus they never seem to be used so intentionally in his ballads as in those of Löwe; nor are they so carefully elaborated into clearness, and it is easier for him to combine the various features. The great superiority of Schumann's ballads to those of Löwe, however, lies in the fact that we never detect a weak passage in them; they are written at one sitting, and are always composed of the same noble materials. We can, therefore, readily understand his preference for the romance form and the ballad form proceeding from it. In the romance the idea is more highly valued than its interpreter and the fact that inspired it, and to Schumann, also, the event was only significant in so far as it expressed an idea which he was capable of pursuing and recasting in music. With him, to be sure, this event could never be so far subordinated as had formerly been the case, and the romance thus assumed greater amplitude than ever before. Even in the briefest setting the accompaniment tries to show this foundation upon facts in its own way. For all that, Schumann is closely akin to Löwe, since he too employs the rhetorical

vocal phrase even in the romance, and also condenses it into a concise verse-structure in his ballads. He thus failed to create any really original ballad style, but he moulded romance and ballad into such close similarity that in the new work of art resulting therefrom, poetic meaning and foundation on facts seem equally important.

We have already stated that Geibel's "Der Knabe mit dem Wunderhorn," "Der Page," and "Der Hidalgo" served him as stepping-stones to this new style of composition. None of these poems can be called romances. But each of them can be traced back to such distinct and actual premises that a romance-like treatment was not only admissible but directly demanded. The three songs are also kept more in the ballad strain, in harmony with their outward arrangement, the melody only still having a more song-like movement.

The next number (Op. 31, comp. 1840) contains three ballads, "Die Löwenbraut," "Die Kartenlegerin," and "Die rothe Hanne," the first of which, particularly, is broadly outlined, and yet the whole course of the action is laid before us in rapid development and with the most minute details. The rhetorical vocal phrase governs the whole succeeding construction more than in the rest of his songs, particularly in "Die Kartenlegerin." The most striking example of this form was, however, published in Op. 45 (1840), "Romances and Ballads" (Part I.), and Op. 49 (Part II., 1840). In "The Two Grenadiers" and "Die feindlichen Brüder," especially, the master unites quietness of description to rapid and energetic development of the plot to a degree which he often failed to reach afterwards, as in "Belshazzar," where he loses the desired effect in his eagerness to give the details.

With this new phase upon which he entered, his progress reached its climax, as we have already had occasion to

observe. In the new field which he now entered, he first learned thoroughly to comprehend the entire organism of formal construction; he first fully recognized the vast significance which form assumes in reference to invention; he became conscious that it is better to force an idea to assume the form established by everlasting laws by expanding or re-modelling it, than, reversing the process, to seek a new form for the idea. Having thus opened his imagination to the influence of the old forms, he no longer needed those outward expedients by which he was forced, in earlier years, to try to concentrate it upon a distinct object. Imagination still inspired him, but it no longer moulded and shaped as heretofore. Thus he gained the last great condition for instrumental, and particularly for orchestral composition, which he now began to prosecute with extreme vigour.

Before turning to consider this new period of his labours, it will be wise to examine his work as a critic in connection with that period, as this work influenced his new productive industry in many ways and more than ever before.



## CHAPTER V.

## WORK AS A CRITIC.

AS already stated, the real beginning of Schumann's professional work as a critic, may be ascribed to the year 1831, when he published his notice of Chopin's Op. 2, in the "*Allgemeine Musikzeitung*." This is not, properly speaking, a criticism of the work, but in the true sense of the word merely a statement of the effect which it produced upon Florestan and Eusebius, and their high estimate of the work, in which Master Raro also agreed. We cannot, therefore, fail to be surprised that Schumann and his friends felt prompted to set up a newspaper of their own a few years later, to pave the way for a new critical tendency; for the characteristic of that criticism against which the "young hot-heads" contended was to mislead by "instructing." The founder of the "*Leipziger Allgemeine Zeitung*," Fr. Rochlitz, was one of the first advocates of that school of criticism which judged artistic work only by its effect upon heart, soul, and ear; which hastily declared all technical explanation to be an offence against art, and simply tried to condense the presumptive poetical meaning into a few high-sounding phrases. His newspaper retained the same tendency under his successor, G. Fink; but some portion of genuine workmanship gradually crept in. Some purely technical, as well as psychological analysis, was employed; but this was soon done on a far more limited scale than in the case of the theorists of the

previous century. Side by side with a very narrow code of feeling, a tolerably exclusive and extremely limited code of laws for artistic form, in no way founded upon a true art-organism, was compiled from certain works of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, by the help of certain theorists, and by this code everything was judged and condemned as best might be.

A highly ludicrous impression is often produced when in one and the same review we read, that in a musical composition "the picture of terror, mental oppression and suspense is most romantically" painted, and upon this follows a statement of the harmonic basis, in the style of Fux's "Gradus ad Parnassum," or the thorough-bass theory of a Türk or an Albrechtsberger. Side by side with that phraseology now used by critical dilettanti in the daily, as well as the musical papers, was also to be found that professional analysis of the composition which sees nothing but notes, and describes chords and their peculiar phenomena. Schumann turned against the latter point of view, and this one-sided criticism, particularly because it led to that narrow judgment of things most injurious to the advance of art, a judgment which condemns every new artistic effort outside the usual ruts, as a dangerous novelty.

He established as his first condition, that the composition must have a meaning, and that this must be variously shaped according to the individuality of the artist; that accordingly every work of art must be judged first from the standpoint of its creator's individuality.

"It is impertinent," he writes in reference to some compositions of J. C. Kessler (1835),<sup>1</sup> "to attempt to measure a whole life by a single act, since the moment which

<sup>1</sup> "Collective Writings of R. Schumann," vol. i., p. 87.

threatens to overthrow a system, may often be explained and excused when taken as part of a whole. It is, therefore, with some hesitation that I express myself in regard to works, of whose forerunners I know nothing. I would gladly know somewhat of the composer's schooling, his youthful opinions, models, aye, his actions and his manner of life—in a word, the entire man and artist as he has hitherto shown himself." To be sure, he declared in the very next year that: "names fetter us and a knowledge of personalities is bondage,"<sup>1</sup> but still the special tendency of his criticism derived very vital impetus from these causes. He wished to see nothing but notes; they were to reveal to him a portion of the story of the life and sufferings of the artist who wrote them, and this insight was naturally made easier by a nearer acquaintance with the individual.

Extracts from the little note and verse book of Master Raro, Florestan and Eusebius,<sup>2</sup> show us how early this, in its way new conception of the nature of music, awoke in Schumann's breast. These extracts form in some degree the prefatory history of the actual "Davidsbündlerschaft," and the "New Journal of Music."

They first of all give us a truthful account of the impression which the collective art-efforts of that period left upon Schumann; from which the idea of a new journal of music grew with more and more distinctness. Of the reviewers (of his own time, of course) he says:—

"Music impels nightingales to utter love-songs; pugs to yelp."

"They hew down the timber; the proud oaks are ground into saw-dust."

"The eye that is equipped sees stars, where the un-equipped sees but cloud-shadows."

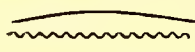
<sup>1</sup> "Collective Writings of R. Schumann," vol. ii., p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> The same, vol. i., p. 27.



“Reviewers are confectioners who work for the *bon goût* without tasting a morsel themselves—who profit nothing by the *bon gout*, because they have worked over it *ad nauseam*.”

Nor does he judge more favourably of the art “which would be but a small art, if it had only sounds and no speech or symbol fitted to express the varying emotions of the soul,” eagerly cried the youth in regard to the “classicists,” the contrapuntists.

“Do not deny the spirit while you acknowledge the letter; you torment yourselves with most miserable trifles, with intricate harmonies, but if anyone who owes nothing to your school dare write down anything not in your style, you revile him angrily. A time may come when that saying already decried by you as the decree of a demagogue: ‘What sounds well is not wrong,’ may be altered to ‘All that does not sound well is wrong,’ and then woe to your canons,  and especially to those in contrary motion.”

“Do not encroach upon the age; let the young study the old masters, but do not require them to carry simplicity and lack of ornament to the verge of affectation. Purify them that they may make an intelligent use of modern technicalities.”

“The anti-chromaticists should consider that there was a time when the seventh struck people just as unpleasantly as a diminished octave does now, and that passion gained more delicate shades through harmonic development, by which music was placed in the ranks of the loftiest instruments of art, having a symbol and a written language for every emotion of the soul.”

“To them it is not enough for the youth to work out the old classic form as a master and *in his own spirit*; he must do it in theirs.”

From such a mood the idea of the necessity for a new musical journal, edited from another point of view, arose quite naturally and unaffectedly.

“A Haman may come some day with a Lessing under his arm to chastise the Philistines, and that day may not be far distant.”

“A newspaper should not merely reflect the present; the critic must hasten past those who are sinking, and at the same time fight for the men of the future.”

“We still lack a journal for ‘the music of the future.’ To be sure only such men would be available for editors, as the former Cantor of the Thomas school, who lost his sight in the service (Bach), and the deaf director from Vienna (Beethoven).”

“As there is a ‘School of Politeness’ (by Rumohr), it amazes me that no one has yet thought of writing a ‘School of Polemics,’ which would be much richer in ideas. The arts should only be cultivated by talented persons—I mean that the language of good-will would be a matter of course in musical criticism if we only had to deal with talented persons. But war is too often a necessity. Musical polemics open a still wider field; so few musicians write well, and so few writers are practical musicians, that neither of the two can grasp the matter properly, and therefore musical battles too often end with a general retreat or an embrace. Would that the right men might come speedily, those who know how to strike mighty blows!”

We have already shown how he called this “New Journal of Music” into life, and he laboured with increasing zeal and renewed pains to extend it more and more definitely in the desired direction. The best musicians and connoisseurs of his time soon rallied round his flag, besides those friends already mentioned:—Ludwig Schunke, Julius Knorr, and Friedrich Wieck, the acute and

able critics: Karl Banck, C. Koszmaly, C. F. Becker, Julius Becker, J. Fischhoff, Oswald Lorenz, and the excellent writers on æsthetic themes: August Kahlert, Dr. E. Krüger, and a long list of other distinguished men, scarcely one of whom, however, could grasp the new tendency both so critically and so decidedly as Schumann.

"The editors of these pages," he writes in a criticism of Hiller's Op. 15,<sup>1</sup> "have been accused of cultivating the poetical side of music to its disparagement as a science; of being young fancy-mongers, who knew but little of Greek and other music, &c., &c. But this reproach touches those very points in which we wish to make this paper differ from others. We will no longer seek to learn in how far art may be most quickly advanced by this or that method, but certainly confess that we consider that to be the highest form of criticism which leaves behind it an impression similar to that produced by the original which animated it."

"In this sense," he goes on to say, "Jean Paul might possibly contribute more to the comprehension of a Beethoven symphony or fantasia by a poetical antithesis (even without any allusion to the symphony or fantasia), than the dozen critics who place ladders against the colossus and carefully measure it with yard sticks."

These peculiar views of Schumann also impart especial significance to the idea of the *Dauidsbündlerschaft* in his critical work. He judges everything which particularly moves and interests him, like Chopin's Opus II., according to the different aspects in which he regarded his own mind, as "Florestan," "Eusebius," or even as "Raro." In this connection we find in a criticism of a Taubert sonata a fine characterization of the two figures of Florestan and

<sup>1</sup> "Collective Writings," vol. i., p. 72.



Eusebius which occupied him so largely. "As Florestan possesses a remarkable facility for seizing upon the defects of a work in the twinkling of an eye, so Eusebius, with his gentle touch, speedily discovers the beauties with which he often contrives to disguise the faults. But both linger longest and most gladly, as youth is apt to do, over poems in which the imaginative element predominates."

Thus both appear in the criticism of the studies by Hummel (Op. 125<sup>1</sup>), and Master Raro speaks the first words, reconciling the two. In the future course of the critical work of this period we recognize the closer or more remote relations into which Schumann entered with the work criticised, by the names which he signs. Where his whole soul was stirred, as in the memorial of his dear dead friend Ludwig Schunke, written in connection with the sonata by the latter,<sup>2</sup> he signed his own initials: R. S.; but where he assumed a more critical attitude, either declining, or coldly accepting, as in the critical survey which he occasionally takes of the new publications in certain special departments, such as chamber music or songs, he usually signed 2. or 12.

Schumann was the first to give due recognition to the necessity for such a "critical survey" and the great significance which it must acquire for the development of art.

"Thoroughly contrary to my taste as everything is," he writes in a review of the "Duet for two pianos," by I. Moscheles (Op. 92),<sup>3</sup> "which looks like newspaper polemics, open or concealed, I cannot explain to myself the simplicity with which many editors confidently declare that they only review those things which are sent to them through the good-will of composer and publisher. Truly the time may come when this will not occur to either of them, least

<sup>1</sup> "Collective Writings," vol. i., p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> The same, vol. i., p. 103.

<sup>3</sup> The same, vol. i., p. 305.

of all to the best composers, who pay no heed to reviews ; and what then ?—others, instead of seeking out the most interesting, whether for their beauty or the contrary among, new productions, turn away with the bitterest contempt, from all that is Franco-Italian, from Bellini, from Herz, &c., and fill their pages with flourish upon flourish ; aye, at the best, they implore German composers for Heaven's sake to cease sending their works to them, but to let the publisher select them out. Is this love of the fine arts, appreciation of art ? Just as in perpetual association with excellent men or the constant contemplation of lofty creations of art, the character and vital warmth of which are directly and unconsciously communicated to the susceptible nature, beauty becomes as it were habitual, so, if we would elevate the fancy of the people, we must lead them through the galleries of the masters and of the younger men who strive to emulate them, rather than hurry them from one picture-shop to the other. Beware of ugliness and obscurity ; nothing is more conducive to commonplace work than commonplace talk about it. No artist needs a clear mirror for his art more than the musician, whose life too often lies in the shadow, and no art should be handled more delicately than the most delicate of all arts, instead of working it up for food with rough hands. Astrological caprices, stupidities, and surmises, belong to books : in a newspaper we would fain, as rich travellers abroad on the waters of a river, fly swiftly forward between the most fertile shores of the present, and if Heaven will, reach the open sea, a glorious goal. How could we pause then, even if a hoarse crow peck at our mast ! no, we sail lightly on and see, see—the foul bird too *must* go forth with us to our levant.”

In this sense also, when it was necessary to establish the entire significance of a valuable work, Schumann always

fixed his eye upon the historic development of the especial variety to which it belonged, as in the above mentioned review of Hummel's piano studies (Op. 125). Here Florestan gives us a clear and extremely striking characterization of all important masters who have published studies, from the "most illustrious Bach, who knew a million times more than we even suppose he did, and was the first to write for students," down to the "subtle Moscheles, who thought of nothing but interesting character pieces, which call the imagination into play," and he then comes to the conclusion that Hummel's studies, for which Eusebius claims indulgence and respect as the work of a meritorious master, "come some years too late."

No farther proof is needed of the incalculable benefit to the writer himself of such a criticism going back to the historical development of the subject in hand. In no other way is the merit or demerit of individual work to be more surely fixed than by comparing it with other work of the same kind, and attempting to establish their relative position in the common development, as Schumann strove to do in his critical survey of the sonata,<sup>1</sup> rondo,<sup>2</sup> study, variation and dance music;<sup>3</sup> of the quartett,<sup>4</sup> trio, duet, overture, concerto, &c.<sup>5</sup> The tendency and purpose of the common development of our art is made clearer by such historical studies than by the most learned theoretical disquisitions, and we might give many instances of the great benefit which Schumann himself derived from them, and of the greater security which they gave him in grasping his own mission.

He takes frequent occasion, too, in his critical work, to give it greater firmness by expressing his opinion upon

<sup>1</sup> "Collective Writings," vol. i., p. 92.

<sup>2</sup> The same, vol. ii., p. 77.

<sup>3</sup> The same, vol. ii., pp. 3, 90, 273.

<sup>4</sup> The same, vol. ii., p. 245.

<sup>5</sup> The same, vol. i., p. 240.



general questions of art, and this is generally done in a style as highly poetic as it is convincing.

The "note-book," already referred to, contains some admirable sentences in regard to art and artists :—

"Only think what circumstances must be combined to produce the beautiful in all its dignity and splendour. We need:—1st. Lofty, deep purpose and ideality in a composition; 2nd. Enthusiasm in description; 3rd. Masterly execution and harmony of action, closely combined; 4th. Innate desire and need for giving and receiving, a momentarily favourable mood (on both sides, that of listener and performer); 5th. The most fortunate conjunction of the relations of time, as well as of the more especial question of place and other accessories; 6th. Sympathy of impressions, feelings, and ideas—a reflection of artistic pleasure in the eyes of others. Is not such a combination a cast with six dice, of six times six?"—*Eusebius*.

Of the performance of the moment while it lasts, Florestan very beautifully says:—

"Orlando Furioso could not write the poem; a loving heart least of all. The phantasmagoria of Franz Liszt's compositions would assume clearer form if he began to examine them. The most marvellous secrets of creation might be investigated in this manner. If you would move anything away, you must not stand upon it. In contrast to this we have the crass materialism of mediæval figures from whose mouths hung placards with explanatory mottoes."

Reference to Hector Berlioz's symphony, "An Episode in the Life of an Artist," Op. 4, gives him opportunity to state his opinion in regard to the powers of expression and description in instrumental music, which we quote the more gladly that it gives us a clue to his own method of composition, and also shows how he watched the

creative genius working within himself, in its most secret chambers.

“Touching the difficult question,” he says, “as to how far instrumental music should venture to depict thoughts and events, many inquire too anxiously. We are certainly wrong if we assume that the composer puts pen to paper for the paltry purpose of expressing, describing, or painting this thing or that. Yet we should not value chance influences and impressions from without too lightly. An idea is often unconsciously developed simultaneously with the musical fancy, the eye being at work as well as the ear, and this ever-active organ clinging to certain outlines amid the sounds and tones, which may be condensed and elaborated into distinct images as the music advances. The more elements, containing images or ideas bred by the tones, which the music employs, the more plastic and poetic in expression the composition will be; and the more imaginative and quick to receive the musician is, the more moving and elevating will his work be. Why might not the idea of immortality occur to a Beethoven in the midst of his improvisations? Why might not the memory of a great departed hero be the inspiration of his work? or the recollection of some bygone days of bliss? Or shall we be ungrateful to Shakespeare, who evoked from the heart of a young musician a work worthy of himself—ungrateful to nature and deny that we have borrowed somewhat of her nobility and beauty for our works? Italy, the Alps, the image of the sea, spring twilight,—has not music discoursed to us of all these? Yes, music may lend even smaller particular pictures so distinct and charming a character, that we are amazed to find it capable of expressing such shades. Thus a composer once told me that while writing, he was incessantly haunted by the image of a butterfly floating down a stream upon a leaf. This gave

the little composition such tenderness and simplicity as only the actual image could possess. Franz Schubert was especially master of this delicate style of genre painting, and I cannot forbear to relate an incident of my own experience. On one occasion, while playing a Schubert march, the friend who was assisting me, at my query whether he did not see peculiar figures before him, replied, 'Certainly; I was in Seville, but more than a hundred years ago, among dons and donnas, walking to and fro, in trains, pointed shoes, sword knots, &c.' Strangely enough our visions agreed, even to the town. None of our readers can explain away that little instance."

"*The main point,*" he further adds, "*is whether the music be anything in itself without text or explanation, and especially whether its spirit be indwelling;*" and we see the dominion which this opinion gradually gained over him, from the fact that in after years, in new editions of his earlier works, he frequently omitted the references to the individual images and incidents by which they were influenced and inspired. His criticisms now proceed mainly from this conception of the illuminating power of instrumental music. The music of the great masters whom he loved, instantly begot the most lovely and bewitching pictures in his imagination.

Schubert and Chopin, as his next of kin, take the lead in this way. In Chopin's Op. II. he sees "Don Juan, Zerlina, Leporello, and Masetto," as speaking characters; the polonaises and waltzes of this master, in conjunction with other dances by Norakowsky, Brzowsky, Zöllner, Ries, &c., produce the vision of a ball big with fate<sup>1</sup> as earlier still<sup>2</sup> the polonaises and waltzes of J. C. Kessler, Thalberg, Clara Wieck, L. von Meyer and Franz Schubert

<sup>1</sup> "Collective Writings," vol. ii., p. 106.

<sup>2</sup> The same, p. 9.



did. In Chopin's works Eusebius sees "cannons buried in flowers,"<sup>1</sup> and down to the famous review of Schubert's C. major symphony,<sup>2</sup> with which he closes his critical work in relation to that master, everything which that most wonderful of lyric poets wrote seemed to him a revelation of the most genuine romantic life.

Next to these, Mendelssohn's artistic greatness appealed to him, as revealed in each work of that master-hand. His articles on the overture to the "Fair Melusina,"<sup>3</sup> the music to the "Midsummer Night's Dream,"<sup>4</sup> and the "Three Caprices" (Op. 33),<sup>5</sup> contain golden words regarding that composer. No one ever entered into Mendelssohn's feeling more fully and at the same time more consciously than this twin genius, who strove to attain the same end, though in a different way. The holy rage against Meyerbeer, which seized upon our Schumann when he saw the "Huguenots," is therefore wholly justifiable. The noble zealot has been reproached with narrow prejudice on this score, but most unjustly so. No one has yet ventured to refute the charge, that Meyerbeer sold his great and rich gifts to the masses incapable of forming a judgment, and greedy for mere enjoyment; that he devoted his wonderful talent, not to the service of art, but to external and transitory objects such as Schumann despised. And should not he, the true priest of art, who laboured unceasingly to set up the sacred tables of the law, kindle with righteous wrath when he saw another gifted priest of art making a golden calf for the multitude to dance about in wild measures with idolatrous delight? Not for an instant did he deny Meyerbeer's great pre-eminence; he simply denounced his misuse of his talents, and that was a duty and a right.

<sup>1</sup> "Collective Writings," vol. i., p. 279.

<sup>2</sup> The same, vol. iii., p. 195.

<sup>3</sup> The same, vol. i., p. 236.

<sup>4</sup> The same, vol. iv., p. 279.

<sup>5</sup> The same, vol. i., p. 324.

Thus, too, he stood on the defence against those virtuosos and parlour musicians, who worked merely for the fashion of the day, the Messrs. Herz, Hüntten, Thalberg, Döhler, &c., while he invariably pronounced favourably, without reserve and with visible pleasure, whenever he found anything worthy of recognition.

Although the works of I. Moscheles, Ferdinand Hiller, L. Berger, Cherubini, Moritz Hauptmann, Carl Löwe, and Wilhelm Taubert had not the same importance for him as those of the greater masters, he was never weary of drawing attention to them ; setting their good qualities in the best light, and representing them as the valiant champions of a new and better era. Nor would that younger generation, W. Sterndale Bennett, Norbert Burgmüller, Stephan Heller, Niels W. Gade, Robert Franz, Edouard Franck, and I. I. H. Verhulst, readily have gained such rapid recognition from their fellow-artists, had not Schumann pleaded so warmly and so constantly for them individually. With the most delicate taste and tact, he not only acknowledged their especial gifts and the field in which they might most easily be developed, but also the limits which were set to their individuality and the dangers which might result.

Schumann thus strove untiringly in his critical work to spread abroad a more spiritual and poetic conception of art than then prevailed, that it might develop into still greater splendour and glory. He expressed this conception at every opportunity, always laying down the principle—that music is not merely tone and sound, but that it also reveals a distinct poetic meaning ; that this must also assume the correct form, if it is to be universally recognized.

He eagerly tried to prove that art has been evolved from this conception ever since the days of Bach, to whom

he pays homage as to no other man, and he tried to seek out and unite the threads of its future progress as he found them in the present, in order thus to guide them to higher perfection.

His critical standpoint was as high as that of his own creative work; here as there, progress in harmony with nature was his first and only object.

This was of course easier of attainment in his critical than in his creative work. When he had carried recognition of the new tendency to a certain point, his critical work, especially as an editor, became a burden to him, because it hampered him in his creative work. After his return from Vienna, we find in his letters various expressions of dissatisfaction at the interruptions of his composition work which the editing of the paper entailed. Towards the close of June, 1844, he therefore withdrew from the journal entirely, the editorship passing to his fellow-worker, Oswald Lorenz. Outwardly this step was probably hastened by bodily illness, as well as by his contemplated removal to Dresden, which took place at the end of the year 1844.

From this date Schumann's work as a critic for the most part ceased, although he occasionally lifted up his voice in approval of rising talent, like that of the poetess Elise Kulmann, or the musician Johannes Brahms.

At the end of his collective writings we find a dramatic note-book (1847-1850) which gives us various critical remarks in regard to operas which he heard in Dresden, and it is at once touching and elevating to see how he delighted in Boildieu's "Dame Blanche," Marschner's "Templar and the Jewess," Gluck's "Iphigenia in Aulis," Wagner's "Tannhäuser," Weber's "Euryanthe" and "Oberon," Rossini's "Barber," and Spontini's "Cortez," &c., and noted various beauties, which particularly im-



pressed him, or how he marked the day of the first performance of the "Prophet" with a black cross. The "Rules for Young Musicians," which he added to the "Jugend Album," contain his whole philosophy of art condensed into a few pithy axioms.

## CHAPTER VI.

## PERIOD OF HIGHEST DEVELOPMENT.

SCHUMANN'S time of highest development dates from that first period of his artistic creations already mentioned, when he wrote works in which his imagination, absorbed in romantic ideals, his deepest feelings stirred by the most varied influences, took outward shape in sonorous tone-forms peculiar to him alone. The new phase upon which that musical progress effected by the romantic school now entered was practically and completely founded upon these compositions. In the smaller piano forms he had already found apt methods of presenting that wondrous life of the imagination which is favoured by the romantic school, as he had also learned to describe the secret fabric of his powerful and redundant subjectivity. All further growth must tend towards a reconciliation of the new spirit and the old, objective forms, which should renew and rejuvenate the latter.

We have already described Schumann's attempt to gain this end in past years in his piano sonatas, but we also saw how slight was his success; the idea of form not having fully dawned upon him, he felt greatly cramped and hampered by that form. He was still so dazzled and fascinated by the glamour of his pictures that he could not frame them in any definite shape, or group them in any unity of perfect organic development. These sonatas, therefore, consist chiefly of those individual piano forms

by which he had hitherto tempered and tested his power of expression; the original, universal idea of the other forms was first fully revealed to him through the medium of the song, from which all instrumental forms are derived. In this field he first learned to work under the influence of a distinct form as well as a distinct meaning. Song-writing first acquainted him with a form which bore the clear impress of a metrical construction which he was forced to repeat in music, and we have tried to give a detailed account of the way in which he did this.

He sought to find this process earlier still in the typical, imitative forms. The "Gigue,"<sup>1</sup> composed in 1838 in Vienna, and the "Fughetto,"<sup>2</sup> composed in 1839, and afterwards published with a Scherzo and Romanze as Op. 32, were inspired by the same desire. The "Gigue" is quite in the style of Sebastian Bach, whom Schumann revered and admired as the greatest of masters, and whom he studied with untiring interest. But that master of counterpoint is led rather by the melodic, and the younger master by the harmonic power of his materials. One of them combines the separate parts, which are always kept perfectly independent of each other, into a wondrous web of harmony; the other labours to work out a rich harmonic apparatus from his own polyphony, which is developed more within the chord itself. The peculiarity of Schumann's mode of thought is even more apparent in the "Fughetto." Here again we have harmonic masses rather than real parts arrayed one against the other. The theme of the fugue opens in full harmony:

<sup>1</sup> First published in February, 1839, in part V. of the "Collection of Old and New Works, a Supplement to the New Journal of Music."

<sup>2</sup> First published in June, 1840, in part X. of the same collection.





and the rest of the work is generally harmonic. In tracing the melodic feature, he is far more eager to produce a series of novel original harmonies, which will display it in a fresh aspect, than he is to throw light on it by a succession of new combinations.

Here, again, in this attempt to revive the older contrapuntal form derived from the melody, true to the tendency which he represents, he is governed more by the force and the rich colouring of the harmony than by the actual significance of that form. It undoubtedly was difficult to revive it by this method, which was far from being founded upon its original idea. He therefore abandoned it, and upon adopting later the form of scholastic counterpoint, he conceived the idea of polyphony more in its primitive sense. *He composed the theme only in the spirit of the new school, and then tried to work it out in harmony with the laws and system of ancient counterpoint.*

This whole conception was naturally more favourable to the development of instrumental forms, which, as we have elsewhere attempted to show, are derived directly from the harmonic process of formation. Schumann also made great use of the direct formative principle of instrumental music, effect by contrast, in his earlier works. We saw that he made this principle particularly prominent even in his sonatas, where the most marvellous pictures sprang into existence, although they were quite disconnected; the

counteraction of the separate parts, from which the concrete form first proceeded, being thus lost. We saw that this was caused by his imperfect appreciation of harmonic materials; the harmonic apparatus which he used being chiefly determined by the motive which he wished to elaborate. Song composition, as repeatedly affirmed, first made him thoroughly familiar with the organic construction of harmony, and he instantly grasped the regulating power of rhythm in all its significance, as we must hasten to add, and was thus for the first time armed with the proper tools to use the principles of the new school even in the highest form of instrumental composition.

The criticism of the Berlioz symphony, to which we have already alluded, throws some light upon this early standpoint of his. He judges it from its harmonic outlines, and decides "that it is no advance upon the ancients in harmony and variety." He does not seem at this time to have been clear that it scarcely corresponded to the accepted idea of the symphony, to have one theme in the tonic, the other in the dominant, and all the accessory parts in the keys nearest related. It was only later, and more especially when he came to study song-writing, that he gained the conviction that all themes for the larger instrumental forms should be derived from that harmonic action if they are to be developed in an organic manner and combined with any degree of unity. Song-writing first fully taught him that the third part must correspond to the first part, as the answer to the question, if the composition is to attain solid shape.

The first work in which this new conception took form, the Symphony in B FLAT MAJOR (Op. 38), was written in the year 1841. It was given at the Leipsic Gewandhaus, March 31, 1841, with another work, "Overture, Scherzo, and Finale," written in the same year, but revised

in 1845 (printed as Op. 52), at a concert given by his wife, under the direction of Mendelssohn, for the benefit of the orchestral pension fund.

Schumann's beautiful and truthful remarks in regard to Schubert's symphony:<sup>1</sup> "Conscious of his own more modest powers, he avoids all imitation of grotesque forms and bold proportions such as we find in Beethoven's later works; he gives us a composition of most graceful form, which, in spite of its novel intricacies, never leads us too far away from the central point, but always returns to it. This fact must be apparent to all who consider the symphony often,"—are also true of this first symphony of his own. And yet it is more nearly allied to Beethoven's than to Schubert's symphony. Far less fanciful than the latter, it is undoubtedly based on more concrete events than the former, as is required by Schumann's nature and whole development; it does not show such a wealth of imagery as Schubert's work, but the separate images are far more plastic, and proceeding, as we have said, from the most natural of formative processes, they are grouped with greater inherent unity.

"To dissect the separate movements," Schumann goes on to say of the Schubert symphony, "affords no pleasure to us or to others; we must transcribe the whole symphony to give any idea of the novel character that pervades it;" and we might say the same of his own. We will merely allude to the way in which he allows a bit of bright, romantic life, such as he had heretofore used for detached pictures of enchanting beauty, in new forms, to assume musical shape in a single sketch from nature, which he casts in the old conventional symphony form.

The symphony is divided into the usual four movements.

<sup>1</sup> "Collected Writings," vol. iii., p. 202.



The first Allegro movement in B FLAT MAJOR, prefaced by a brief introduction, is followed by a Larghetto in E FLAT MAJOR, succeeded in the third movement by a Scherzo in D MINOR, with two trios in D MAJOR and B FLAT MAJOR; after this comes an Allegro *animato e grazioso*, as Finale.

How charming must have been the pictures which floated before the imagination of the musician, inspiring him to write such music, full of life, mirth, and merriment. The last movement especially differs so decidedly from Schumann's usual manner in this respect—the joyous feeling is so freely expressed—that we do not always instantly recognize his hand, as heretofore, by the peculiar workmanship, not always even in the choice of motive, but always in the refined arrangement and the characteristic harmonization.

The influence exerted by the idea of form, even in the choice of a motive, is almost more marked in the first movement than in any of the others; the latter are unquestionably among the clearest and most popular of Schumann's compositions, but he devoted all the elaborate pains and careful harmonic touches to working them out which he strove so unweariedly to put into his earlier work. In the introduction itself, the first motive of the true allegro movement rouses a rich harmonic life, introduced, however, not by the octave, but by the third, by the trumpets and horns, being then taken up by the entire orchestra. It here appears, to a certain extent, as a signal for the beginning of the lively chorus which then bursts upon our ears and eyes. As the first theme of the allegro movement, the motive is then worked up into the first part, with even stronger and more impressive harmonization. The motive of the second part is equally simple and correct in point of form, but owing to Schumann's singular mode of representing the dominant key, this also shows the genuine

imprint of his spirit and of the new school. He distinctly prepares for the entry of the second motive in the dominant:



and then does not introduce it directly, but by an indirect route over its parallel key and sub-dominant. It therefore appears in such a paraphrase, that the effect of contrast in it is seen in a peculiar and quite a different light than in the usual arrangement :



The image displays three systems of musical notation. Each system consists of a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) for piano accompaniment, with additional staves for woodwinds and strings. The first system includes a Flute/Oboe (Fl. Ob.) part in the upper right and a string part (Str. pizz.) in the upper right. The piano part features a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The second system continues the piano part. The third system also continues the piano part. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *p* (piano) and *pizz.* (pizzicato).

In similar fashion the farther progress of the whole movement is affected by the old form quite as much as by the new tendency, so that it seems to be a genuine mixture of the two. The same may still more truly be said of the closing movement, which betrays the judiciously amalgamating master-hand only in its more skilful outward adjustment. Again, it is chiefly the second motive that he



works out in his own peculiar manner, opposing it to the first motive in a succession of fresh forms and situations. He next uses it as a transition from the scherzo to the principal theme, and in the second part particularly he reveals all the sweetness and wealth of the soul stirred by romance, and this feeling then retains the mastery until we reach the brilliant close, which is as powerful as it is polished.

Beside these two movements, the other two, the larghetto and scherzo, seem somewhat scanty of cut. The larghetto, particularly, is hardly more than a "Phantasiestück" of the earlier period. The hymnic breadth of the true adagio, as created by Beethoven, is certainly but little founded in this whole tendency, aiming as it does at fertility and fullness of expression rather than at breadth and depth. Yet this, too, Schumann attained, as we shall presently show. In the scherzo, he seems to be largely guided by the idea of the older minuet, which he tries to superimpose upon the spirit of the new school through the two trios, the first of which is kept in 2-4 time.

This first attempt to combine the new romantic purport and the older forms is, nevertheless, perfectly successful. We must acknowledge this fact with the more admiration since the *technique* of instrumental music is necessarily so different from that of the piano. It is most difficult, if not impossible, to adapt or reconcile Schumann's true *technique* to the orchestra. The peculiar polyphony of the orchestra is quite unlike that of the voice or the piano, and Schumann never thoroughly understood it, because he generally regarded the separate instruments as playing real parts, even those which do not actually do so, thus not infrequently weakening the effect of the one through that of the other. When he afterwards tried to adapt his whole new pianoforte style, with its wealth of harmonies

and chords, to the orchestra, it often lost the clearness and simplicity for the ear which it still preserved for the eye.

In this, his first orchestral work, the idea of the symphony is still supreme and all-pervading, and the instrumentation is therefore subordinated to it, the separate motives seeming to be derived from it.

That orchestral work to which we have already referred, printed as Op. 52, and also the D minor Symphony, date from this year; but we must postpone further account of them until we take up the works of the years in which they were revised and completed (1845 and 1851).

Schumann attempted to display the new style in a peculiar way during the following year (1842), in a quartette written for strings (Op. 41), arranged for strings and piano as a quartet (Op. 47), and as a quintet (Op. 44).<sup>1</sup> For obvious reasons the arrangement last mentioned was the best.

We have seen how closely the peculiar treatment of the piano in chords was connected with Schumann's individuality, and also how directly it was inspired by that individuality. But this treatment conflicts with the *technique* of the string quartet even more strongly than with that of the complete orchestra. The essential character of the four stringed instruments employed, two violins, viola, and violoncello, best corresponds to the broad, melodious cantilena and sonorous figure-work which seem less founded on Schumann's style of composition and his pianoforte style. It is therefore harder to adapt the string quartet to this style than it is to make the complete orchestra conform to it;

<sup>1</sup> This work was first performed on the 8th of January, 1843, at a morning concert given by Robert and Clara Schumann to an audience of invited guests. Clara Schumann played it in public for the first time at a concert given by Sophy Schloss, Feb. 9, 1843, assisted by Messrs. David, Klengel, Hunger, and Wittmann.

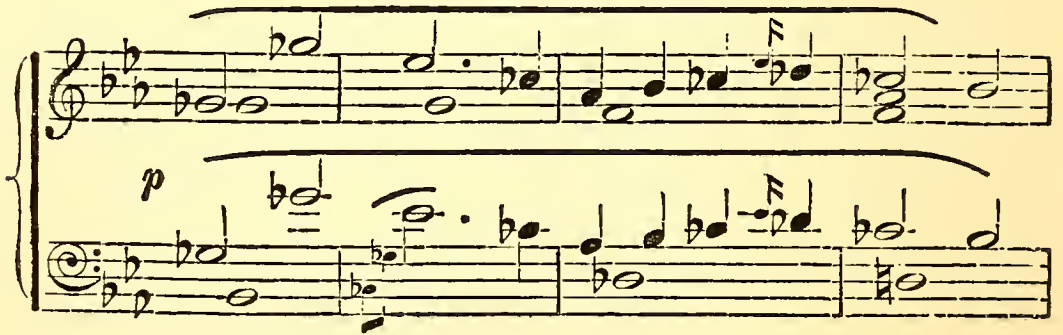
and as the rich colour and fulness of sound of the wind instruments are lacking to it, the ideal meaning which he tried to give to these quartets is not so apparent as if they had been written for the orchestra or even for the piano. The finale of the A major quartet (No. 3), and the scherzo from the F major quartet (No. 2), would be far more complete and imposing if arranged for orchestra, just as the adagio from No. 2 or No. 3 is far better adapted to the pianoforte. The frequent doubling in the octave which he felt compelled to make is contrary to the spirit and intention of the quartet, although suited to those of the orchestra or piano.

However, these quartets give valid proof that he fully understood the idea of the sonata and of the symphony form, and intentionally blended it with the intentions of the new school. But he did not choose the right instruments. He only obtained the proper interpreter of his ideas when he added the piano to this combination of instruments, in his next work. The piano naturally afforded him the best opportunity for developing his most individual *technique* (which seems to be the most direct product of his personality), and also gave him a deeper insight into the inmost essence of the string quartet. The peculiar construction of this form therefore varied in degree of success and influence, as was also the case in the symphony and the quartets. Here, too, the arrangement was usually determined by his own individual ideas, but that thematic elaboration already characterized, which derived its chief canons from harmony, plays a much more important part in its composition than in former works of the kind. The whole first movement is actually woven out of but two harmonic motives; from the first:





which helps to form the first part by its varying harmonic changes, and as a cantilena derived therefrom :



and from the second :



and even the figure-work, required to complete and perfect this form, is most easily developed from these simplest of materials.

The two middle movements, the slow movement as well as the scherzo, have greater meaning and breadth. The former is in the measure of a march throughout, a funeral march of course—no other could find a place in the sonata, least of all in the place of the adagio; and we see it is something precious which the master thus conducts to the grave by the first episode (in C major), which produces a strangely religious effect from the choral treatment of the string quartet and the peculiar resolution of the chords into glittering figure-work. But he is also deeply afflicted by his loss, and a second movement is accordingly opposed to the original march, in which all the power of passion is unrestrainedly expressed. By degrees, however, his wild grief grows calm; a feeling of devout submission gradually gains the mastery, and the first interlude (in F major) follows, soon changing back to the march theme. The frantic passion expressed in the *agitato* seems to be restrained here by the immediate vicinity of the beloved dead; it breaks loose with all the greater force in the scherzo, in which two trios (the second in 2-4 time) again take up and describe the emotion in stronger contrast, the first being full of sweet enthusiasm, and the second moving in the “labyrinthine mazes of a dream.” When we reach the close of the whole, as if in token of reconciliation we catch an echo of the pious resignation found in the second movement. The finale is equally significant, and a worthy ending to the work. It is singularly enhanced by the fact that the first movement is distinctly in the C minor key, while its counter-subject is in the key of E flat major. This renders possible the natural introduction of the G major key with its neighbouring keys in the utmost inde-

pendence, the whole composition being evolved from this ever-increasing harmonic growth, with more and more melodic and rhythmic richness, until towards the close it rises to a climax in the combination of the first motive of the first movement with the first motive of the last movement, thus reaching a most adequate conclusion. The work thus plainly marks the highest point of perfection of the new tendency in the domain of instrumental music. The subjectively polished expression finds perfectly appropriate objective expression in the older form of the sonata in the same peculiar way which Schumann had already employed. The one does not seem faded or vague, but retains all its captivating truth and superabundant fervour, and the other is so accurately worked out and so organically developed that it is always clear and intelligible. The master had now acquired the power of expression and construction, so that no closer explanation was needed to prevent misconception of his meaning.

He never could excel this work, nor can all the works of this period be ranked upon a similar plane of perfection.

Even the kindred "Pianoforte Quartet" (Op. 47), written in the same year, does not stand as high. He could not so well combine the three stringed instruments, violin, viola, and violoncello, into unison, enhancing, elevating, or upholding the piano, as he could the four used in the quintet. We do not so plainly recognize that innately essential feature, their mutual dependence on each other and on the piano, in this work as we did in that. They are not so logically developed from the idea of form, and a special meaning and the consequent lack of repose evident in the structure, is, on the whole, more marked than the finish of the form. The composer again devotes himself to the painting of details, which injures the con-



sistent development of the form. From the "Phantasiestücke" for piano, violin, and violoncello, composed during the same year (printed as Op. 88), we learn, however, how much better than ever before he now understood this latter point. At first he intended to condense these compositions into a trio, but as they did not fully answer to his idea of that form he chose the more distinctive one used. The separate numbers, romanze, humoreske, duet, and finale in march tempo are in the form of those Phantasiestücke already described, expanded to suit the requirements of the new instruments introduced; they have hardly any more intrinsic connection than have the separate numbers of the old Cassatio or Serenade in vogue in the time of Haydn.

In these works Schumann took complete possession of the instrumental field. His increased and vigorous effort to acquire unlimited control over all the forms and means of musical expression must needs have exerted a reflex influence also upon the lesser piano forms in which he had hitherto exclusively worked. This influence is indirectly shown by the "Variations for Two Pianos," written during the next year (1843), published as Op. 46.<sup>1</sup> The theme is so laden with ornament as to seem a variation of the fundamental thought. It could be possible only for a spirit as gifted as that of Schumann to develop it into a succession of novel and even more beautifully executed variations. These variations do not actually deepen the original meaning, which already included all depths possible to it, but they expand and amplify it by a web of figure-work display into a pattern even more intricate and more elaborate. Each variation explains the theme, which is introduced in fresh shape dependent upon the variation,

<sup>1</sup> First publicly performed, Aug. 19, 1843, by Clara Schumann and Felix Mendelssohn, at a concert given by Pauline Garcia.

and demanding a new interpretation for each new conception. This work thus seems to be the last and finest of the similar works of an earlier period, the necessary conclusion to preceding labours. It differs from the "*Études Symphoniques*" even in outward form. In the latter every variation is, like the theme, an independent composition, except the third, which leads directly to the fourth. In the new work the variations are so closely bound together, and so interwoven with the theme, both inwardly and outwardly, that they are not severally specified as variations, as in similar works by Beethoven or Schubert. In this way the piece has much the same significance as the andante in the form of variations, so often found in sonatas and symphonies; were the episodic and incidental passages continued a little farther, it would pass unquestioned as such. In the "*Études Symphoniques*" Schumann adopted merely the formal apparatus of the variation form; in this later work (Op. 46) he uses it to interpret the stormy emotions of his own soul.

"Paradise and the Peri" (written in 1843),<sup>1</sup> that work in which he tried to fit all the forms and materials of the new school to the amplest dimensions of the musical drama, seems to be the keystone to this whole evolutionary process, which was logical even in its least details. He handled vocal and instrumental expression with equal skill, and it only required the union of the two to make the new art-work of monumental importance in this field also.

As everyone knows, the text is taken from Thomas Moore's poem of "*Lalla Rookh*." Made acquainted with this work as early as 1841 by the German translator, Emil Flechsig, the friend of his youth, he instantly saw the

<sup>1</sup> First performed, Dec. 4, 1843, at the Gewandhaus, repeated on the 11th of Dec., both times under the composer's own direction.

great value to him of just such a subject, and grasped the idea of its proper treatment with all the rapidity of his nature, but he did not fully carry out his plan for some two years. The work is a splendid proof that no more suitable subject could be found for Schumann, nor could the poem ever find a musician more inspired to treat it.

It belongs to that refulgent world of romance where Schumann's imagination loved to linger, to represent which he possessed such ample material and forms. It is not that world of fancy, peopled by airy, sprightly elves, tricky kobolds and hobgoblins, whence Mendelssohn took the subjects of some admirable compositions; we are introduced to the world of reality, but we see it in the light of romance, glowing in all the warm tints, and pervaded by the sweetest odours of the Orient. The personages presented to us are not mere imaginary beings, mere ghosts and phantoms from another sphere, but they are creatures who think and feel as we ourselves do; even the "Peri" seems less the "child of air," that the oriental legend describes, than the embodiment of human thought and feeling. Much of the history of mankind, and more particularly of the history of the human heart, is told to her and to us in her flight through the world in search of heaven's best gift, which, according to promise, will open the gates of Eden, from whence her race is banished in punishment of an error. In the human heart alone she could find heaven's best gift.

The poem required radical changes, which Schumann himself undertook to make.

It seems right that he should have retained the most primitive form of the oratorio, that of the Passion music. The poem has no genuinely dramatic course; there was not the smallest intrinsic or extrinsic reason to dramatize it more fully. Even with treatment such as that of the



“Walpurgisnacht,” it must have lost much of its picturesque development. The only proper way to treat the subject, therefore, was to retain the original epic form, and to introduce a narrator in the style of antique oratorio, who should relate the facts, in a few simple words, up to the points where they seem to demand a more dramatic setting. We live the story over again with him, and the separate characters and marked moments of the action are bodily presented to us. If Schumann deserves any blame, it can only be because he was not always true to himself in the musical treatment of the narrator. Like actual narrative in a ballad, such a personage should always be treated in a style the reverse of that suited to dramatic or lyric incident. We saw that a more rhetoric melody was reserved for actual narrative in the ballad, being modified only in harmony with the direct progress of the narrative, and that the whole power of musical description was only necessary when individual lyric or dramatic incidents were to be pictured.

From this it follows that Schumann should have set all the elaborate lyric and dramatic parts of the composition in strong contrast with the narrator, as in the old Passion music. He should never have varied the simple, rhetorical style of the narrative; but he uses a very different method, even dividing the narrative among various parts—soprano, alto, tenor, and bass—probably from a desire to avoid monotony; perhaps induced to do so also by the vocal melody. The narrative must necessarily become monotonous, because even here Schumann strives after formal roundness in melodic, but less declamatory, vocal style. The forms actually used everywhere adhering closely to the text, both the narrative and those forms are too much alike in character, and monotony is the necessary result. If Schumann, like Bach in his Passion music, had

introduced the narrator in the simplest way, only by a more careful noting of the accent, the various numbers would have appeared in much bolder relief, and monotony would have been avoided, as in Bach's case, by this alternation of the narrative and of the lyric or dramatic development. We should indeed have lost some excellent numbers, such as "And now o'er Syria's rosy plain, the light of eve is spread again," but other and more important ones would have gained decidedly, and in this especial instance the passing mood so skilfully arrested by Schumann might have been carried farther instrumentally, and the splendid picture thus perfected.

The composer himself added to the text the two decorative choruses of the "Genii of the Nile" in the second, and of the "Houris" in the third part, as well as the final chorus, the Peri's scena, "Rejected," the quartette, "Say, is it so?" and the tenor solo and chorus, "'Twas when the golden orb had set;" they show the strong dramatic standpoint from which he viewed his subject, and the great attention that he paid to the decorative element.

This is founded on the idea of form. The oratorio, (and as such "Paradise and the Peri" is to be considered,) can dispense with outward display. The conditions of time and place without which dramatic progress is impossible, which are given in the spoken drama and in opera by decoration and costume, must in the epic poem be replaced by mere description; in the oratorio, music must be substituted with its full and entire power of expression.

The drama here unfolded before us leads us by turns through the flowery fields of India and Africa, and to the gates of Eden. With most delicate instinct, the master avoids all effort to make the latter more real to our imagination. We are always led to the gates of Eden with the

narrator by an accompaniment similar to the introduction to the entire work and seemingly woven of light.

The bright, laughing life of the Orient, on the contrary, is painted with wanton extravagance. The Peri's aria, "I know the wealth hidden in every urn," is full of the most cloying and voluptuous harmony, such as only thoughts of the Indian heaven could inspire. The viola phrase sounds like the strange, mysterious murmur of the sacred stream, the music of flutes, oboes, horns, and bassoons floats about us like Indian airs, and the trumpets recall long-forgotten legends. More voluptuous yet is the life in the succeeding chorus, "Oh, beauteous land! oh, realm so bright!" and even the closing description of the miseries of war which devastate the land fails to dispel the radiant light in which it is bathed. In this, as in his account of the pest which lays the country waste, our master is more successful than anyone else has ever been in a similar vein.

It is dangerous to try to describe such things. All beauty is often lost in the effort to be thoroughly truthful and life-like. The use of such inartistic means to reach the desired effect as the tam-tam, and the excessive use of the tambourine and similar instruments, is too tempting, and only the greatest masters have despised it as an unworthy method of painting a musical picture. Schumann also always avoided it, working chiefly through his own peculiar method of harmony which we have described so often, as well as by its orchestral representation introduced in the most deafening figure-work. The piccolo and the banda (big drum and cymbals) are not absent from the wild march with which he introduces the tyrant "Gazna," but their strange musical colour is merely added to complete the picture. The clang tint of the other and far more important instruments is not, as so often happens, hidden by this effect, but is only made more conspicuous; still less are these instru-



ments of any individual value,—the picture would be perfectly intelligible without them.

Equally successful is the allusion to the dread silence with which the pestilence broods oppressively over the land, indicated by the awe-inspiring chords allotted alternately to a chorus of wind and of strings.

The chorus of the spirits of the Nile, "Come forth from the waters," is a perfect cabinet specimen of charming decorative painting, such as is especially enjoyed by the musical romanticists. The three-part chorus is delightfully characteristic of the tiny sprites, and the instrumental accompaniment, with the striking figure introduced by the 'cellos and taken up by violas and violins, the wind instruments coming in mainly with rather heavy chords, must also perfect the picture outwardly. The opening chorus of Houris in the third part, "Wreath ye the steps to great Allah's throne," is a most worthy companion-piece. It is conceived with the same realistic truth; it, too, does not lack the triangle, big drum, and cymbals, but they only help to mark the rhythm more sharply in detached passages.

Our expectations are also fully met by the quartette of the four Peris, "Say, is it so?" An equally happy picture of the airy partners of the Peri's fate is seldom found in other similar instances. Nor was Schumann himself as successful, either in earlier or in later efforts of the kind, as he was in the numbers mentioned. Those of them which represent the progress of the whole event in its inner development, which transfer its point of gravity to within, stand out conspicuous, being perhaps executed with even greater perfection than the rest.

The "Peri" is one of the most attractive figures ever created by the aid of musical expression. Music alone was capable of forming her innermost essence, as it were, of breeze and perfume, and yet animating her with a soul so

full of ardent aspiration and passionate emotion ; and this only when endowed with those means furnished it by the Romantic school, which, as we have amply proved, Robert Schumann did more than any other man to expand to rare richness and to a delicacy of expression hitherto unknown.

The romance style so exquisitely transformed by him finds fitting application in the Peri's very first song, "How sweet seems to me, banished child of air!" repeating her ardent longing for the lost Eden by the simplest and yet the most exhaustive appliances. Even the beginning of the strophe, which takes its keynote (F sharp minor) from a modulation on the sub-dominant (B minor), is peculiar to our master, and at the same time admirably characteristic of the sentiment to be expressed. The angel's promise that the Peri's guilt should be forgiven when she brings back Heaven's choicest gift, fills her whole being with eager haste, plainly shown in the accompaniment to the following recitative, which is written in heavy accents. In the aria already mentioned, which is filled with an Indian glow, she passes all the treasures of the East in review, and, with a sad consciousness that the required gift is not to be found among them, she soars from our sight.

We next see her upon the field of battle, hovering over the corpse of that noble youth who burned to pierce the tyrant and oppressor of his land with his dart, and failing that, fell beneath his hand. She takes the last drop of blood that gushed from the hero's heart before the free spirit took its upward flight, and with the exultant song, "Let this be my gift," she wings her way to Eden's gate. The chorus chime in, and a broad fugue-like finale is evolved from the sentence, "For blood must holy be that is shed in the fight for liberty. Let this be thy gift ; right welcome yonder."

Schumann, like Händel, aims at a strong and sonorous, rather than a carefully legitimate treatment of the theme. The first part of the work ending at this point, the second part follows a similar course. In the second part the Peri again appears at the gate of Eden, is repulsed, and, on her next flight to earth, finds the second presumptive gift for Heaven. This part, like the first, ends amidst the rejoicing over this gift, so that the third part also opens like the two preceding ones. Perhaps it would have been more suitable to the arrangement of the whole composition to bring the first part down to the first rejection of the Peri, which would have rendered the finale less powerful, to be sure, but also more exciting.

The second part would then have been shorter and more episodical, and had it been carried on to the second dismissal, the sameness of the ending could hardly have been as tiresome as the sameness of the entire construction now is. At any rate, the arrangement accepted by Schumann is not thoroughly established; the first and second parts close before they reach the end.

The angel chorus informs the Peri, "Far holier yet the boon must be, that opes the gates of Heaven for thee." She sinks sadly back to earth again, and in the land laid waste by plague finds her second gift. A maiden has hastened thither, fearless of dread disease and death, only anxious to live and die unparted from her heart's beloved, who is already infected with the poison; a speedy death leads the pair to eternal union. The Peri then sings a soft, sweet dirge over them, and as the chorus join in she soars aloft to Eden's gate with the last expiring sigh of purest love. Here the second part ends.

In the beginning of the third part, the chorus of Houris gives a glimpse of the Hindoo conception of Heaven. The Peri's gift is not the right one yet, and almost despairing



she wends her way to earth once more. But the longing for the lost Paradise returns with fresh force, and with undaunted courage she vows to seek the precious gift without pausing for rest or repose.

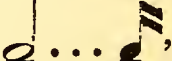
This whole number (No. 20) is a fine example of the characterization of the Peri. It seems to be constructed with strange lightness and ease, and yet it is redolent of masculine courage. The Peri quietly endures the scorn and mockery of her light-hearted sisters, but with an aching heart.

The entrance of the happy solution of her task, which follows next in order, is marked by one of the most wonderful compositions which Schumann ever wrote (No. 23). The Peri nears the spot which is to witness the fulfilment of her most ardent wish; by various signs a foreboding consciousness dawns upon her that she "here shall find the boon, the charm that can restore so soon an erring sister to the skies!" and Schumann seized the incident in all its grandeur and significance, but executed it in a style which, to our thinking, is grotesque rather than really great. The frequent recurrence of major and minor sevenths in the vocal part:

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp). The first staff contains the lyrics "ein U - mu - let" and "ein Zei - chen glänzt". The second staff contains the lyrics "dort ge - wahr' ich's auch ein Blatt, auf wel - chem" followed by "etc.". The notation includes various note values, rests, and a double bar line in the second staff.

ein U - mu - let      ein Zei - chen glänzt

dort ge - wahr' ich's auch ein Blatt, auf wel - chem etc.

and the singular, prevailing rhythm , make the declamation vague and faltering, rather than really impressive, nor can even the accompaniment breaking in in

crowded and shifting chords, remove this impression, although the master tried to produce unity and periodicity of construction by the detached figure appearing in the 'cellos.

With all the greater skill is the Peri conducted through the future course of the work to its close. The final song especially, "Joy, joy, for ever, my task is done!" is treated like a hymn of triumph, broad and brilliant. We know but one similar composition, equally important in feeling and expression, with which it may be compared—the duet from "Fidelio," "Oh namenloze Freude!"

We may also mention as pre-eminent in conception and execution, that entire episode descriptive of the maiden's loving devotion. Schumann had partly appropriated, partly created, an inexhaustible store of means for expressing just such inner soul-states as are here presented to us. With the alto (or mezzo-soprano) aria, "Deserted youth!" he begins to develop a series of most moving pictures of various soul-states, which reach a climax in the maiden's aria, "Oh, let me only breathe the air!" and close with the Peri's dirge, to which we have already referred. A worthy companion to this is found in the final scene, from the tenor aria, "Again the Peri soars above," down to the Peri's hymn of triumph, in which the chorus also joins.

This work thus seems to be the culmination of Schumann's development, if not of all his tendencies and aims. The entire wealth of musical expression which he had partly created, partly transmuted, is here compressed into one important incident. The inherent defects of this composition necessarily proceed from that same tendency which always forced him to develop his ideas with richness and variety rather than with unity.

This work, "Paradise and the Peri," also marks a resting point in his outward activity. We find nothing which

dates from this year (1844) but the Epilogue to Goethe's "Faust," and an aria and chorus for the opera of "The Corsair," taken from Byron.

Many external circumstances also contributed to this result, the first being his journey to St. Petersburg with his wife towards the end of January, 1844. The extraordinary success with which they met, there as well as in those cities visited on the way—Schumann by his compositions, and Clara by her matchless piano-playing—cannot have failed to exert some influence upon the future enterprises and changes in the outward circumstances of the incomparable artist pair. Schumann himself describes the special incidents of this journey in a letter to Wieck.<sup>1</sup>

Soon after their return to Leipsic early in June, he resigned his position as editor of the "New Journal of Music," and in the autumn the family removed to Dresden. On December 8, the artist couple arranged a *matinée* as a farewell, not "for six months" only, as was assumed in Leipsic, but for ever, neither of them ever returning permanently. The more wholesome situation of Dresden, as well as the wider field of action which it offered Clara Schumann, probably combined to influence their decision. Schumann's health was greatly shaken by the incessant labour, exciting events, and struggles of the past years, and those symptoms of organic trouble shown in his student days re-appeared to a somewhat alarming extent.

From the statement of Dr. Helbig,<sup>2</sup> we learn that a dread of high mountains or any lofty place, as well as a fear of violent death, were now added to those symptoms common after great mental and physical exertion, such as exhaustion, chill, trembling, and sleeplessness. When we come to consider the music to "Faust," we shall examine more

<sup>1</sup> Wasielewski, p. 142.

<sup>2</sup> The same, p. 146.



closely into the special part which his labours upon that music played in causing these symptoms. By most loving care he was so far restored that he could again apply himself to the most serious studies during the following year. The letters written at this date do indeed contain many complaints of ill-health, which did not, however, prevent him from working.

He again resumed his social intercourse with his friends Ferdinand Hiller, Robert Reinick, Berthold Auerbach, Julius Hübner, and Edouard Bendemann, whom he had avoided during his illness, and also took an active share in the public musical life of Dresden, trying to promote its welfare to the utmost extent of his power, as one of the directors of the subscription concerts founded by Ferdinand Hiller.

The contrapuntal studies of the year 1843 were probably inspired by these symptoms of disease. They gave a definite and less injurious direction to his imagination, otherwise averse to constraint and apt to wander into unintelligible regions, and to his spirit, which was much given to self-tormenting subtleties. We may therefore readily accept the theory that the loving care which guarded him with such faithful zeal was also active here, striving to withdraw him from other tasks too exciting for his nervous system, and to lead him into the calmer, more restful field of pure form. Hitherto he had worked untiringly to bring expression to its highest pitch; for contrapuntal forms formal construction was more important, and he could much sooner rejoice in finished work.

This was the origin of "Four Fugues for the Pianoforte" (Op. 72), "Studies for the Pedal-Piano" in canon form (Op. 56), and "Six Fugues on the name of 'Bach' for the Organ" (Op. 60), and also of the "Sketches for the Pedal-Piano" (Op. 58), and "Intermezzo, Rondo, and Finale,"

as a finale to the "Fantasia for the Piano" (published as a concerto, Op. 54). The "Symphony in C major" was also sketched out during the year. The fact of a pedal-piano being introduced into the Leipsic Conservatory for the use of the students probably led him to compose for that instrument, as it then seemed likely to gain a wide popularity. We must not omit to mention here that Schumann had charge of the departments of composition, piano-playing, and playing from the score, at the Conservatory of Music opened at Leipsic, Easter, 1843, under the direction of Mendelssohn, teaching with but few interruptions until he left Leipsic. The cause of his comparative lack of success will be explained hereafter.

The "Studies for the Pedal-Piano" are treated in the style of Bach's "Two-part Inventions," the pedal bass or a full accompaniment being added. We have long known that Schumann never wished simply to imitate antique forms, but sought to transmute them and to inspire them with a fresh meaning, and therefore the first of the studies now under discussion is the only one which fully corresponds to the Inventions; the rest are duets for two independent parts. In Nos. 2, 3, and 4, we have two trebles, in No. 5 a treble and a bass, and in No. 6 a soprano and a tenor, to which an accompaniment is added, in a style of the utmost independence possible; Nos. 4 and 6 particularly are pervaded by genuinely Schumann-like feeling. *The true rejuvenescence of old forms is that which infuses the new spirit into the theme, which proceeds directly from that spirit, and which works out the theme in strict accordance with the eternal laws of form, as in this case.* Had our master been more mindful of the nature of the instrument for which he wrote these studies in canon, like his prototype old Johann Sebastian Bach, we should unquestionably have been forced to reckon them among his most popular works.

But the separate parts are often so closely crowded together, and cross so often, that their independence could only be maintained by different executive instruments, and is scarcely to be recognized by the most practised ear when played upon the piano.

The "Four Fugues" (Op. 72), on the contrary, frequently show a management of the separate parts only to be justified by Schumann's peculiar earlier polyphonic style, never by that method required by the laws of song. Such treatment of the various parts, for instance, as the following:

(Op. 72, Fuge 3.)



is, to say the least, scarcely correct, although we might not call it exactly corrupt. Here, as in the fughetto from Op. 32, the composer follows his impulse to give the theme characteristic harmonic shape, rather than to develop it freely and in accordance with its innermost import. In the "Six Fugues on the name of Bach," he is far more successful in giving the ideal meaning of his themes with ever-increasing



power; here they are nothing but a formal restraint to him.

We might make frequent reference to the fact that he paid the highest reverence to the greatest and only master of counterpoint, and constantly studied his works with growing zeal. "I always flee to Bach," he writes to Mrs. Henrietta Voigt, "and he gives me fresh strength and desire for life and work," and to Keferstein he writes (Jan. 31, 1840): "Mozart and Haydn knew Bach but partially and fragmentarily, and we cannot fail to see that Bach, had they known him in all his greatness, would have largely influenced their productions. But the profound combinations, the poetry and humour of the new school of music, proceed principally from Bach. Mendelssohn, Bennett, Chopin, Hiller, and all the romanticists (of course I mean the Germans), are much nearer to Bach in their music than to Mozart, for they are all thoroughly familiar with Bach, and I myself daily make humble confession to that lofty spirit, aspiring to purify and strengthen myself through him."

These "Six Fugues" give ample proof of Schumann's deep comprehension, not alone of the spirit, but also of the *technique* of Bach, and of his struggle to recast his own *technique* to conform therewith.

The very first fugue shows the old form in singular setting. The theme itself is pervaded by the Bach spirit, but in the very first working-out, otherwise in strict harmony with the old mode of conception, we run against an important anomaly based upon a very different method of conception. The younger master is anxious, not only to acquire the right form by a regular and scholastic treatment of his theme, but above all to give its ideal meaning plastic form and the utmost possible breadth. Therefore he here regards his theme as the mere vessel to contain that

meaning, and he alters it whenever the latter requires. The theme of the first fugue suffers such a change upon its re-appearance as subject. The response has led it towards the dominant, which naturally does not admit of the entrance of the subject; a transition of even half a measure seems scarcely in harmony with the idea, and Schumann therefore does not hesitate to introduce the theme:



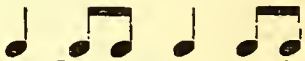
rhythmically changed for the second time:



in the same shape it again takes up the bass towards the end of the first working-out, thereby acquiring such importance that it appears alternately with the original theme in the second working-out, which enters after a short interlude made up of motives borrowed from the first theme. The stretto affixed to this ("gradually faster and louder") is another of those innovations hitherto foreign to the fugue, which find their full excuse in the peculiar nature of the theme. The first half only of the theme is worked out in it; the second forms the counter-subject appearing in the stretto, the whole composition thus closing with the broadest and fullest of harmonic pictures.

The theme of the second fugue is also developed and worked out in the spirit of Bach. Here we are particularly interested in the interludes obtained from the altered construction of the first part of the theme, because they proceed from the idea of the necessity of contrast, as

manifested in modern instrumental music, but not in the old fugue form. This idea of contrast has taken such strong hold of our master in this instance, that he feels obliged to give us the  $\frac{2}{4}$  time within the  $\frac{3}{4}$  time, a novelty which is again caused by his desire to combine the old technics with the new spirit.

The third fugue has scarcely higher value than that of a study. It is hard to justify the fact that the theme appears in two parts on its first entrance, without in any way affecting its farther working-out, but the great monotony of the predominant rhythm  more than anything else, prevents the development of the whole into greater significance. The theme is chiefly harmonized in chords, and the intermezzi are correspondingly treated.

The last three fugues are much more important. After two closely united workings-out, the fourth fugue offers us new workings-out, in which the theme also appears in contrary motion, but only a few times, as lies in the nature of this fugue. All the expedients of the modern tendency are expended upon its form as derived from the name of Bach, and again more particularly towards the close. The theme of the fifth fugue is also derived in the spirit of the new school, and then worked out in harmony with the old laws of form. Here, too, Schumann contrives to shape the form in the style of modern instrumental music, while he conceives the theme in its augmentation wholly in accordance with the canons of the old school, and then sets it in actual contrast to the first theme. In the last fugue, finally, where the theme is again more simply constructed and then worked out with all the materials of fugue work, it is the counter-subject particularly, planned wholly in the new spirit of the romantic school as it is, which displays the form in the light of that new tendency.

The next great instrumental work, sketched during the



same year, and finished in the following year (1846), the second<sup>1</sup> symphony (in C major, printed as Op. 61,) shows the extraordinary value which these contrapuntal studies had for the artistic and perfect composition of larger orchestral works. Their influence was especially beneficial upon the finale of this symphony, as is seen in the counter-subjects opposed to the principal subject, which grow out of the scholastic contrapuntal treatment of a motive in direct as well as in contrary motion:

The musical score is for an orchestral movement, likely the finale of Mendelssohn's Symphony No. 2, Op. 61. It features five staves: Hautbois & Clarinets, Bassoons, Flutes, Violins, Viola, and Bass. The key signature is C major, and the time signature is 4/4. The score is marked with a forte 'f' dynamic. The music is characterized by complex contrapuntal textures, with multiple voices moving in both direct and contrary motion. Brackets and slurs are used to group related melodic lines across the different instruments. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and accidentals, all rendered in a clear, legible style typical of 19th-century musical publications.

as also in the simple counterpoint, reminding us more of the old school, upon which the principal subject of the scherzo rests, and which is often apparent in the second trio in that movement, and in the adagio as well as in the closing movement, not only lending greater formal strength to the separate movements, but also helping to give them

<sup>1</sup> Really the third symphony; the D minor symphony, composed in 1841, at the same time as the B major symphony, but not rewritten until 1851, and then published as Op. 120, preceded it. The first performance of this C major symphony took place, Nov. 5, 1846, at a subscription concert given at the Gewandhaus under Mendelssohn's direction; it was repeated on Nov. 16, at a concert given by Clara Schumann, also under the direction of Mendelssohn.

greater unity and coherence. This general effect of unity was especially necessary to him on this occasion. The separate movements have not only a close ideal affinity, but they also often refer to each other in point of form. The constant and almost monotonous adherence to the original keynote, C, seems worthy of note from this point of view. The introduction, the first, second, and final movements are founded on the key of C major; the beginning of the adagio is in the gloomy C major, changing into the C minor key and back to C major at the close. It is one of the most distinctive features of the new school, that it not only ceased to retain and practise that means of asserting the key sanctioned by the old school and the old masters, but actually created and shaped new methods of work for itself in this regard. Schubert, especially, had a far deeper and broader conception of the tonality than his predecessors, and he found a multitude of novel means of working it out more richly and with greater subjective truth. In more than one instance we have tried to show how Schumann adapted this apparatus to his own uses, expanding and transforming it in an original manner. In this symphony the new construction put upon the term tonality finds the widest application in the field of instrumental music. The introduction first takes the key of C major from the sub-dominant (F major); it also shows a transition from the latter to the tonic, and the first movement also, which opens with the tonic, is based far more upon the sub-dominant than on the dominant. The latter is only reached at the close of the first part by a real modulation. The first part ends with a half cadence on the dominant; the third part soon reverts to the mediant—E flat major—whereby the entire movement receives a somewhat minor character, for the most natural rise from the minor is the transition to the mediant.

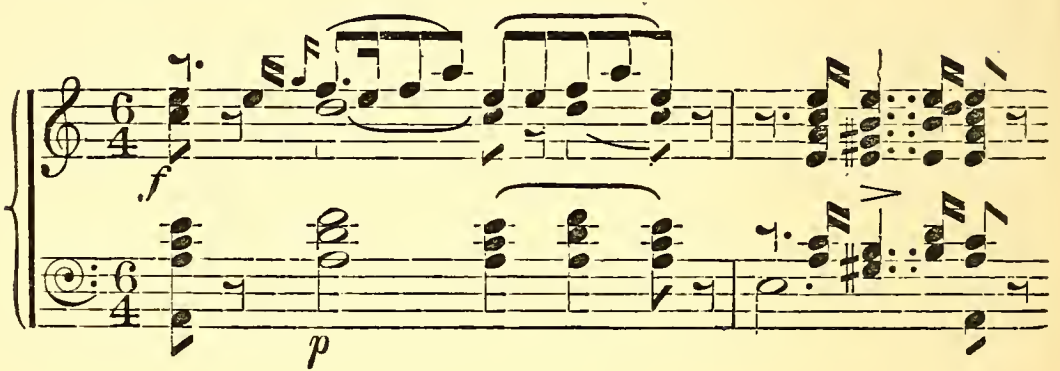
The same criticism holds good for the scherzo, save that there the transition to the mediant is even more decided from the outset. The tonic at first appears much more like the dominant of F minor. The severe dominant key is purposely avoided, but the G minor key is introduced in its place. In the first trio the dominant of the keynote at first prevails, but not so distinctly as to efface all memory of the upper mediant.

In the second trio, which appears after the repetition of the actual scherzo, the A minor key is generally maintained with a strongly marked transition to the great mediant of the keynote—E minor. This second trio joins in the second repetition of the principal subject, and the key of C major is then more strongly marked in the appended Coda, but chiefly by the aid of the chord in the minor ninth, and of the chord in the diminished seventh derived from it. The adagio follows the old order of modulation of C minor, but repeats its second part in C major and also closes in that key, although it is, for the most part, taken as the sub-dominant of F major, that is, plagally.

The last movement then opens at once with a vigorous transition to the dominant, in which the first theme also enters; but when it appears in the tonic, C major, the composer has gained such firm control over that key that he never really lets it go again. All the strange modulations which he takes up only confirm the value of the key as tonic. This movement, however, thus acquires a proud, triumphant character scarcely to be found in any other orchestral movement written by Schumann, still less in any written by any more recent master. If we consider more minutely the way in which the movements are bound together and how closely each is related to the other, the ideal meaning of this masterpiece will be made clear to us without the aid of any special programme.



The most important motive, namely, that in the first movement, appears in the introduction:



the first part of the first allegro being developed out of the second half:

*Allegro ma non troppo.*

A musical score for the first part of the first allegro, featuring woodwinds and strings. The top staff is for Oboe (*Ob.*), the middle for Bassoon (*Fag.*), and the bottom for Viola and Horn (*Viola. H.*). The time signature is 3/4. The woodwinds play a melodic line with slurs and accents, while the strings provide a harmonic accompaniment. Dynamics include piano (*p*) and crescendo (*cres.*).

the second half then appears:



in conjunction with the original setting also contained in the prelude:

A musical score for piano in 6/4 time, measures 5-8. The first staff (treble clef) is labeled 'Bl.' (Horn) and 'sf' (sforzando). It begins with a half rest, followed by a half note G4, a dotted half note F#4, and a half note E4. The second staff (bass clef) is labeled 'Str.' (Strings) and 'f' (forte). It begins with a half note D3, a half note C3, a half note B2, and a half note A2. The key signature has one sharp (F#).

A musical score for piano in 6/4 time, measures 9-12. The first staff (treble clef) is labeled 'Bl.' (Horn) and 'sf' (sforzando). It begins with a half rest, followed by a half note G4, a dotted half note F#4, and a half note E4. The second staff (bass clef) is labeled 'f' (forte). It begins with a half note D3, a half note C3, a half note B2, and a half note A2. The key signature has one sharp (F#).

as a transition to the second subject, in which again the counterpoint of the basses to the solo of the horns, trumpets, and the alto trombone, from the prelude:

Trumpets,  
Horns,  
Trombones.

Strings.

*pp*

is characteristically introduced:

This solo of the brass wind, however, recurs several times, particularly at the end of the finale, where the other motive from the prelude also finds a place:





The prelude in this composition accordingly has an essentially different significance from that awarded to it in the older symphonies, even in the first one written by Schumann. With the old masters it only served as a preparative. It was meant to put us in the proper mood for the understanding and artistic enjoyment of the work which was to follow. With this younger master it seems to be, to some extent, the motto containing in small compass the ideal meaning of that story of his heart that he tells us, and which he therefore prefixes for immediate comprehension and apprehension.

The school to which Schumann belonged was not occupied with great and startling events or the wonders of nature; it sought its objects in the imagination and the heart of the individual rather than in the history of mankind. In this composition Schumann strikingly illustrates the fact that a single individual trait may be represented in symphonic form. It is first seen in the prelude, marked by the warning cry of horns, trumpets and trombones, and followed up in the succeeding movements with Schumann's peculiar conscientiousness, light being thrown upon all its minutest details. Fresh scenes and images constantly strike his ear and eye, which he unfolds with increasing richness, holding fast to the prelude as the formal and ideal

bond of union. Thence he is generally led to retain the normal key in ever newer and stranger construction. We will write no programme, a thing which the master himself abhorred. From what we have already said, it will be easy to see that he gained more and more mastery of his sentiment; that it wavered less between passionate emotion and sweetly melancholy romance in the prelude than it did in the first movement; that it changed in the scherzo to happy, riotous humour, not without its serious side in the second trio, and then sank, though but for a brief space, into blissful and visionary oblivion of self in the adagio, from which it again soared into exultant, overwhelming rapture in the finale.

The "Pianoforte Concerto with orchestral accompaniment" (printed as Op. 54), and also finished in 1845, does not reach an equal point of perfection. The picture of the rivalry between individual virtuoso culture and the whole body of the orchestra was too discordant with Schumann's peculiar aims, for him to devote his whole genius to it. It was hard for him to conceive of the union of all the instruments in the orchestra into one body, to which he was to oppose his own individuality; he preferred to draw the instruments into a community of sympathy, and to give them the same share as the piano in the representation of his individuality, and the concerto thus actually became a sonata with orchestral accompaniment. The treatment of the solo instrument is but partially adequate to the demands of a concerto. He could invent interesting and characteristic figure-work, but none that was brilliant in the concerto sense of the word. And yet he evidently laboured to satisfy this requirement, without much result, except to weaken the figure-work, which usually gushed so luxuriantly from his pen, into less significant accompanying figures. This manifest weakness of the work is

all the more painful because in other respects it is no less valuable than the finest works of this period. Indeed, in point of invention and elaboration of the theme, it is one of the ripest products of this school. The first movement especially is a growth of the selfsame soil as the "Phantasiestücke" of this first period.<sup>1</sup> It is, for the most part, built up from the first theme:

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a Clarinet (Clar.) and Piano (Fag.). The first system begins with a forte (sfz) dynamic, followed by a piano (p) section, and then returns to forte (sfz). The second system continues the musical theme with various dynamic markings and articulations. The notation includes treble and bass staves with complex rhythmic patterns and harmonic structures.

which, after a most characteristic prelude in triple time, performed by the piano alone, is taken up by the wood wind instruments first, and then by the piano. He could scarcely have found another theme as broadly planned, and at once so pithy and so full of the aroma of romance. A wealth of harmony, enchanting sweetness of melody, and the most captivating treatment of syncopation, the chief characteristics of the new school, are here combined in full per-

<sup>1</sup> First composed in 1841, and at first entitled by Schumann, "A Fantasia."



fection. The second motive is far less significant, it is mere romantic trifling with bits of tone colour :

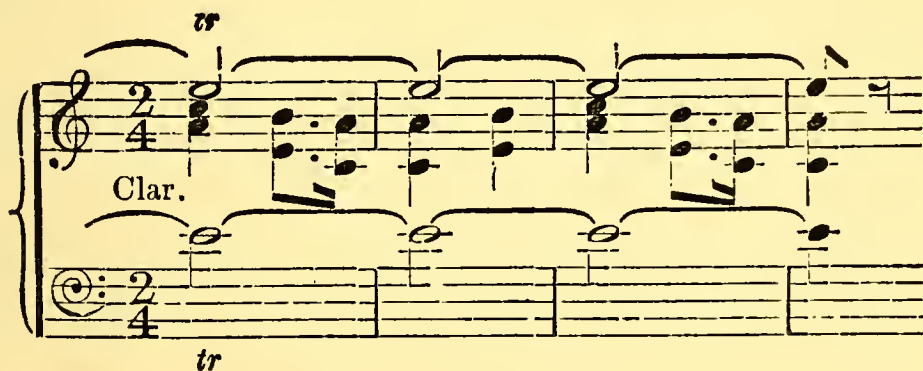


and even when farther worked out and transformed, the composer could not give it any marked value. He certainly felt this himself, for he invented a new motive for the middle movement :



but always refers the elaboration of both back to the first motive with so much energy and decision that that motive governs the entire movement as its principal subject. In order to introduce it into the second part in C major, Schumann permits the second motive, as given above, to enter the dominant of that key, and bases its farther development on the sub-dominant. The principal theme having been worked out in conjunction with the first and second episode in C major, it is not only possible but necessary that it should appear in broader harmonic and rhythmic form in A flat major (6-4 time, andante espressivo). The introduction to the whole movement, expanded and more richly worked out, then leads back to a broad and elaborate interlude, chiefly developed from the opening measure of the principal theme, which prepares the way

for the re-entrance of the first principal subject in the prevailing tonic. The second theme in its working-out again introduces the principal theme in the same key (A), in which the farther development also continues down to the cadenza, which, unlike the older method, is fully executed, and that, too, in the original key. An “Allegro molto” developed from the opening measure of the leading motive :



closes this movement. In place of the adagio, Schumann wrote an “Intermezzo,” which forms a better contrast in its graceful setting to the first movement than an adagio would have done, all the effect of the adagio having been already exhausted by the andante of the first movement. The motive of the “allegro molto” with which the first movement ends then takes us to the finale, which is treated wholly in the style of the old rondo form. We quote the most characteristic motive of this movement here, because it strikingly marks the altered position in regard to Schubert :





The lack of a definite object and love of sensuous toying with harmonies and melodies of unusual effect often produces a regular rhythmic construction in Schubert's works which not infrequently becomes monotonous. Schumann, on the contrary, often sketches his theme in such varied rhythm that all farther rhythmic arrangement into larger divisions becomes very difficult. The constant introduction of syncopation, the most effective means after all of avoiding rhythmic monotony, degenerates later into a trick. In order to make the general rhythmic arrangement more varied, he introduces the theme in various rhythms, as in the first movement of the A minor concerto, where the theme appears in 3-4, 6-4, and 2-4 time, or he contrasts one time with another in a movement, as in the scherzo of the E flat major quartet, where the first trio distinctly displays the 2-4 time in contrast with the 6-8 time of the scherzo and of the first trio. The afore-mentioned use of 2-4 time within 3-4 time, which thereby appears augmented to 3-2 time, is of course a far more artistic way to give variety of form to the rhythm.

The only other works to be mentioned for the year 1846 are the Choruses printed as Op. 55 and 59, which bear farther witness to Schumann's complete mastery of this department of composition. The songs of Burns confirm what we have already said in regard to his relation to that poet. "The Highland Lassie," "I'll aye ca' in at yon toun," and "The Highland Laddie," particularly preserve



the true flavour of the folk-song and yet are most artistically conceived in the spirit of Schumann. It may be considered reprehensible for him to have also written music to "An Address to the Toothache," but the closing stanza, in which the poet gives a more poetic turn to the conception, which is prosaic enough in and by itself, and, above all, the skilful way in which Schumann grasped the poem and reproduced it in music, fully justifies the composition. The text of the four songs in Op. 59,<sup>1</sup> on the contrary, seems to us scarcely suitable for a mixed chorus. "Nord oder Süd," by Lappe, is unfitted for musical treatment by its more didactic and learned style, and Schumann attains to no genuine emotion by his somewhat dry declamation. The other songs, "Am Bodensee," in two parts, by A. M. Platen, "Jägerlied," by Mörike, and "Gute Nacht," express a sentiment which has little affinity for choral effects; it therefore fails to find adequate representation in the profundity peculiar to Schumann, nor does the choral effect succeed in producing any strong impression.

Towards the end of the year he and his wife undertook a professional journey to Vienna, and there, as in Prague, where the artist pair gave two large and crowded concerts upon their return journey, they were received with the utmost marks of distinction. Their four concerts in Vienna, as well as the two in Prague, won the marvellous couple many new friends and increased the admiration of their old ones. Schumann found a less favourable field for his efforts in the north. The "Singakademie" of Berlin had just then chosen his "Paradise and the Peri" for performance at one of its annual subscription concerts, which took place in March, 1847, under the personal direction of the composer. Various embarrassing circumstances concurred to

<sup>1</sup> It really contains five songs, Platen's poem consisting of two, condensed into one by Schumann.

affect and diminish the success of the work. Carefully as the pupils of the Academy had studied it, they could not give all the composer's shades of meaning, for he still seemed remote and strange to them. Ever since the foundation of the Academy in the previous century, almost exclusive attention had been paid to the old religious *capella* music, such as the oratorios of Händel, the cantatas of Bach, and other similar works; no farther proof of the unfitness of such studies to prepare pupils to understand the spirit of the works of the new school is needed. Only a direct knowledge of that spirit could enable one to master even the technical difficulties with which the work in question bristles. Add to this the fact that at this time the only orchestra available to the "Singakademie" consisted chiefly of amateurs, so that the instrumental part of the work, which is highly essential to a proper appreciation of it, could not be satisfactorily given, even from a merely technical point of view. Still it might have been possible to combine the two, chorus and orchestra, so as to give a tolerably adequate performance, if the leader had been skilful and self-possessed. We all know how unfit Schumann was for such a task. The directive talent was but slightly developed in him, nor could he make the study of his works easier for the singers and musicians by brief hints in regard to his intention. It is therefore readily to be seen why this fine work met with so little success at the hands of a public even less prepared than the performers to understand it. Although some few voices were raised in approval, the performance was almost a failure, and only after some years, through the efforts of Julius Stern, could the composer find a hearing for his works in Berlin.

It is not improbable that his experiences in Berlin largely contributed to his decision to seek a more practical

sphere of action upon his return to Dresden. Towards the end of the year he assumed the direction of the "Männer-Liedertafel" (Male Choral Club), hitherto conducted by Ferdinand Hiller;<sup>1</sup> he also formed a club for mixed voices, which was started under his direction January 5, 1848, and afforded him ever-increasing delight up to the date of his moving to Düsseldorf in the summer of 1850. Although these novel relations did not make him a thoroughly good conductor, they gave him, as he says in a letter to Hiller, "a fresh consciousness of my directive powers, which I thought destroyed by nervous hypochondria, and the growth of the Choral Club proves my ability to develop them up to a certain point." (He soon gave up the charge of the "Liedertafel," "because he found too little musical ambition in its members.")

This practical work also exerted a great influence upon his productive labours.

He wrote (in 1847) "Solfeggi" for both male and mixed voices, thus showing the serious view which he took of his new field of labour as the leader of choral societies. The "Ritornellas" for male voices (Op. 65) were probably composed under a similar inspiration. Being treated as canons, they are most excellent studies for male choruses, as well as valuable musical compositions. They call for no more special consideration than the farewell song, "Es ist bestimmt in Gottes Rath," for chorus and wind instruments (Op. 84), or the two trios (Op. 63 and 84), all written in the same year. As both these trios belong so entirely to the newly-entered field of instrumental music, which we have already amply characterized, we will not study them more minutely. The first of the two, in D minor, is treated with greater passion, and is more closely allied to his

<sup>1</sup> At this time called to Düsseldorf as municipal director of music.



earlier works than the second ; it is stirred with the genuine romantic spirit, and is somewhat averse to formal mould ; the second, in F major, shows the influence of contrapuntal studies to a greater degree, and is the more perfect in form of the two.

Two of the works of this epoch especially interest us, namely, the opera of "Genoveva," begun in 1847, and ended in August, 1848, and the music to Byron's "Manfred," also completed in the same year. We shall refer later to the music to Goethe's "Faust," upon which the composer had been working since 1844, although with many interruptions.

Schumann made a list of opera subjects for final choice, which Wasielewski copies,<sup>1</sup> among them being "The Nibelungenlied," "Faust," "The Wartburg War," "Abelard and Heloise," "Mary Stuart," "Sakontala," &c. He finally chose the most inappropriate and worst of them all, showing by this very selection that, like many of the romanticists, he had but little perception of the nature of dramatic *subjects*. Isolated, stirring, or even dramatic scenes, such as any event may contain, cannot lend it sufficient interest to make it fit for effective dramatic presentation. The first and chief essential for a dramatic subject is that it should excite our entire interest. When depicted in the form of a novel or an epic poem, the writer's skilful execution may lend increased interest to a subject unimportant in itself.

Delicate detail drawing may indeed arouse our undivided interest even in trifling incidents and events. But in the drama, on the contrary, where such delicate drawing of details is impossible, the subject must itself be interesting. That which is to be represented as actually

<sup>1</sup> Page 240.

occurring in our presence, must have a significance as an event which shall justify its presentation. The legend of "Genoveva" has no such value, at least not in Schumann's version of it. The mere fact that it is based upon one of the commonest and most threadbare of motives, "the downfall and final triumph of innocence," would not alone make it of doubtful merit as a dramatic subject, but the more than marvellous issue of the plot destroys whatever value it may have. Even in Weber's opera of "Euryanthe," the motive of which is somewhat similar, the plot is worked out in a manner which is far more rational from a dramatic point. Schumann at first applied to his intimate friend, the poet-painter, Robert Reinick, for help in arranging the text. Of two books prepared by Reinick, neither proved satisfactory, and the composer so altered his text, making large use of the dramatic arrangement of the same legend by Tieck and Hebbel, that Reinick could no longer regard it as in any sense his work. Wasielewski has already exposed the defects of this compilation, and although we do not agree with him in thinking "the hind and little child" essential to the drama, we fully share his feeling that the introduction of the intrigue is extremely clumsy, and the dénouement quite as bad.

Mistaken as Schumann was in regard to the essence of dramatic subjects, he was equally at fault in regard to the intrinsic nature of *dramatic* music. Like lyric poetry, it unveils the most sacred mysteries of the soul, not in single lyric outbursts which isolate and divide the emotion from humanity at large, but so massed in concrete form as to show us the desired sentiment in its relations to the outside world as a factor in various incidents and events. While lyric poetry gives us only a partial picture of the man, the drama shows him to us entire. Owing to Schumann's ignorance of this fact, he won but slight success in the

operatic field. No master of equal rank had entered this field since Beethoven, but scarcely any other could have been made to feel more acutely that the conditions of dramatic music are not to be fulfilled by lyrical clearness of style. Perhaps no other master could have painted the sinful and devastating passion of Golo in more vivid colours; surely none had so many means at his command for the perfect portrayal of the pure and pious love of Genoveva and the Count Palatinate; and even in that decorative painting which transports us to the age of chivalric love and loyal valour he is scarcely excelled by Carl Maria von Weber.

So, too, the truth and accuracy of the realistically rude chorus of warriors, and the alluring, devilish spectre by whose aid Margaret deceives Golo and the Count, are hardly to be surpassed.

But all these fine features of the work have little intrinsic coherence. No psychologic incident of any value escapes the master's notice. He seizes each one with his own peculiar truth and exactness, but he forgets to link them together as the drama requires. He makes the psychologic basis clear to the dullest comprehension, but does it fitfully only, and not in characters which have hardened into unity as the drama demands. Golo's very first aria, "Frieden zieh' in meine Brust," very plainly shows the want of really dramatic development.

The separate melodic phrases so admirably characteristic of Golo's mental state, instead of being bound together with the unity which we find in Schumann's songs, and at the same time given greater scenic expansion, are arranged with an utter lack of connection, so that the situation is explained to us in separate outbursts of emotion, not fixed in any one concrete state.

At this point it is especially painful to see Schumann's



readiness to sacrifice the organic development of the melody to his effort after extreme delicacy of detail. This destroys the peculiar charm of the work, and as he scorns to employ the broad and vigorous methods of grand opera—which Wagner, for instance, tries to substitute—he diminishes the success. The separate numbers, of course, have even less scenic cohesion, so that the dramatic connection is never really promoted by the music.

We do not, of course, refer to that extremely convenient repetition of one and the same motive in various scenes, used by Wagner in his dramas until it has lost all interest, but we mean that inner union of single parts into larger, solid divisions, such as the drama demands, and such as we found even in “Paradise and the Peri.”

“Genoveva,” therefore, is certainly a masterpiece of psychological growth in every detail, but not a dramatic work of art, in which persons and action are vividly presented to us in their actual entity. Incontestably the most valuable composition in the opera is the Overture, which gives us a good bit of mediæval romance, together with the pregnancy of the transmitted form. It tells us nothing of the action of the opera, as most of the *pot-pourri*-like overtures of the romanticists do, but it transports us to the scene of the event. The prelude, with its diminished ninth chords, and its dainty, *filagree*-like violin figure, merely informs us that sombre powers are to appear in contest with the purest and truest love; and, although we are also led to suspect from the allegro that demoniac forces are drawn into the fight, no direct allusion is anywhere made to the action, except at the close, where we gain the happy assurance of the final triumph of innocence. The opera was first performed in Leipsic, June 25, 1850. It has been given recently at Dresden, Munich (October 12, 1873), Vienna (January 8, 1874), Wiesbaden (February, 1874),

Weimar, Carlsruhe, Berlin, and Hamburg (November 14, 1874), and, although it has never found favour with the great mass of theatre-goers, it has always proved well worthy of a permanent place in the repertory of the German theatre, as one of the few operas in which the highest aims of music are served.

A comparison of this overture with the overture to Byron's "Manfred," written in this year, with music for the entire poem, will show us how seriously he regarded his task when working in the field of instrumental music.

It is highly characteristic of his whole tendency at this time that he should have chosen to set this poem by Byron, as well as Goethe's "Faust," to music. The close affinity between the two poems forced the aged master of German verse, who had admiringly and attentively watched the young British author's career, to recognize it as a second "Faust." Soon after its appearance (London, 1817) he gave the following frank opinion of it:—

"The tragedy of 'Manfred' by Byron is a wonderful apparition, and one that touches me closely. This strange and gifted poet has absorbed my 'Faust' into his own soul, and, hypochondriac-like, has sucked most singular nutriment from it. He has used those motives which suit his purpose, so that they have lost their identity; and for this very reason I cannot sufficiently admire his intellect. The change is so wholesale that a most interesting lecture might be written on the subject, and upon the likeness to the original. If I were to write it, I could not truthfully deny that the sombre glow of a lavish, limitless despair finally becomes oppressive. Still, the pain that we feel is always mingled with admiration and esteem."

Although the intrinsic similarity of the fundamental idea of the two poems is apparent throughout, it yet seems

as if Goethe's direct share in "Manfred" were not so great as he imagined.

Byron firmly denies Goethe's influence upon his work. He writes (first edition of his dramas, published in 1833) to his publisher, in June, 1820 :—

"I never read Goethe's 'Faust,' for I do not understand German. Monk Lewis translated and recited a great part of it to me at Coligny in 1816, and of course I was much impressed by it; but it was the 'Steinbach,' the 'Jungfrau,' and many other things that led me to write 'Manfred.' Indeed, a mere abstract of the story will show that other poetic powers must have co-operated to give so different a form to so similar a fundamental idea."

Manfred, a rich and independent Swiss Count, lives alone in the castle of his ancestors. Devoted to the study of magic, he has learned the secret formulæ and arts of the ancient necromancers by the most patient toil. Spirits obey his command, but still he is no happier than Faust. He is not only tortured, like Faust, by the most painful and insatiable longing for an ever-increasing extension of his dominion over the dark subject powers of nature, but is also tormented by the more agonizing pang of remorse. He has loved his sister Astarte, the partner of his studies and experiments, with an unhallowed passion, and denounces himself as guilty of a double murder—that of both body and soul. This crime brings him deeper misery than his unquenchable thirst for knowledge. The sovereign lord of the most hidden powers of nature, he cannot blot the horrid memory from his soul. He longs for "forgetfulness" of the ardent desire for more knowledge, which has hitherto been unappeasable. He summons his subject spirits, but they cannot give him what he seeks; nor can the lofty Alps, the deep waterfalls, the lovely fairy of the glittering waves, nor even in unconsciously attempted



suicide can he find an answer to his prayer for "Oblivion, self-oblivion." Then, at last, he descends to the lower regions, and there wins back his pristine peace by the pardoning word which he wrests by his fervent entreaties from the beloved victim of his crime. He is now released from the old gloomy powers which he fancied that he ruled, but which really governed him. He disclaims them, and again submits himself to the universal law of death which he had planned to escape by his contract with the spirits.

From various letters written by the poet we learn that the work was not intended for the stage. "You may gather," he writes to Murray (from Venice, February 15, 1817), "that I have no very high opinion of this imaginative creation; but at least I have made it impossible that it should be put upon the stage, having the greatest contempt for the theatre, ever since my affair with Drury Lane." In another letter, dated March 6, he says: "I composed it with a horror of the stage, and with the intention of making even the thought of dramatic presentation impracticable."

Schumann made considerable changes in the text of this poem also. In the first act, for example, he introduced four spirits, instead of the original seven, and also so abridged their several songs that the vision loses much of its significance and depth. The omission of the seventh spirit—the most important of them all—is particularly inexcusable. It is he who says:—

"The star which rules thy destiny  
Was ruled, ere earth began, by me:  
It was a world as fresh and fair  
As ere revolved round sun in air;  
Its course was free and regular,  
Space bosomed not a lovelier star," &c.,

and his close connection with Manfred is also outwardly

hinted, according to the poet's note, by the "Star seen at the darker end of the gallery, and stationary."

Schumann's failure to enter more closely into this symbolism makes the whole vision seem more like an ordinary ghost story, only outwardly related to that which follows. The incantation scene, which comes later, is also curtailed by half, which could only be excused by his intending the work for theatrical performance, which, as we have seen, he did not. Otherwise this incantation scene offered opportunity for the execution of an important musical composition, the more so that Schumann, again deviating from the original intention of the poet, who meant the entire spell to be sung by a single voice, wrote the first part for four voices, changing to one, and finally to three voices, as the work proceeds.

Other abbreviations of the dialogues are made with a view to the dramatic performance of the work, and are, therefore, of but little interest to us. It is, however, to be regretted that the composer failed to embrace the opportunity to write an extremely characteristic composition, offered by the poet in the "Song of the three Destinies," in the third scene. While diminishing the share of the music, contrary to the wish of the poet, in this scene, he increases it in certain passages where the poet is far from requiring it. Some he rewrites in melodramatic form, and at the close introduces the "Chorus from a distant Cloister:"—

" Requiem æternam  
Dona eis !  
Et lux perpetua  
Luceat eis ! "

Melodramatic treatment seems hardly necessary in a dramatic performance where we see all that the music is here meant to imply visibly enacted. Yet these same numbers, with the overture and the entr'acte music, are

the best things in the whole work, and once more show us how much richer Schumann's instrumental expedients were than his vocal ones. We have already referred to the profound difference between the "Manfred" and "Genoveva" overtures. In both we see depicted a contest between dark powers, but in the "Manfred" overture the struggle is purely mental, having no connection with time or place, while in the overture to "Genoveva" it seems to be more physical, with its frequent allusions to local and temporal events. It is filled with that aroma of romance which pervades the entire Middle Ages; horns, trumpets, and trombones are combined to gain this colouring.

The "Manfred" overture springs wholly from an attempt to acquire psychologic development without any decorative accessories. Even the three syncopated opening chords remind us of the crime which hangs over Manfred with its oppressive weight; and how plainly we see the battle begin in the slow movement; how apparent are all its elements; Manfred's wild, impetuous struggle for freedom, in the syncopated violin motive; the obstinate resistance of the dark spirits and Manfred's guilt, in powerful chords, and Astarte's image as the mild consoler, in the sweeter "motivo;" how passionately the battle rages in the allegro, Astarte being more and more clearly revealed as its central point, in the second motive; how the contest waxes tumultuous under the influence of the dark spirits and is only moderated by Astarte's image, while the oppressive burden of crime is again brought to our minds by the famous entry of the three trumpets. Then this gradually becomes less agonizing as the flame of battle burns up more hotly than before, while that inflexible chord on the three trumpets seems to be harmoniously and melodiously resolved, and Manfred's death at the close seems to be his liberation and redemp-



tion, any attempt to prove which farther in words were to "waste holy words on idle uses." The separate motives are so distinctly marked and so vigorously worked out under the influence of the given idea, as well as in accordance with the universal laws of formal construction, that no farther comment is needed to make them intelligible.

The songs of the spirits do not strike us as being half so perfect as the overture, Schumann being guided in writing them by the hobgoblin of romance, rather than by the idea which it serves. He tries to characterize the various spirits in harmony with the poem, as seems imperative. But it would at any rate have been more appropriate to leave the work of characterization chiefly to the orchestra, preserving a mere spirit-like monotony in the songs. At least more unity and also more varied expression of the sentiment might have been achieved.

The "Incantation" (No. 3) especially might have been made much more powerful and effective in this way. In Schumann's hands it becomes more monstrous than awe-inspiring. The hymn and brief address of the spirits of Arimanes, on the contrary, are well carried out, as are also the orchestral movements. No one was better fitted than Schumann to give orchestral illustration to the "Apparition," "Adjuration of the Witch of the Alps," "Summoning of Astarte," and "Manfred's Address to her." Many have protested against the melodramatic treatment of the various phases of this dramatic poem, and we have already declared that we deem it but ill fitted for theatrical performance. For concert performance, however, it is necessary and extremely effective.

Aside from the great technical difficulties which the *mise-en-scène* itself presents, the ideal purport of the work, which could only be intelligible to a select few, must prevent its presentation upon the stage of any theatre. It

seems, on the contrary, to be peculiarly adapted for concert performance ; we only wish that a genuine poet might ere long be found, to write words to bind together the detached musical compositions, words which would not form so glaring a contrast to the poem of Byron as altered by Schumann, as does the prosaic and trivial text by R. Pohl which is now used. The first full performance of the work was given at the "Gewandhaus," March 24, 1859, at a charity concert. It was repeated at the twentieth subscription concert, March 31, 1859. The first *scenic* representation took place at the Leipsic Town-theatre, November 23, 1863. It was given in Vienna on the 22nd of December, 1874, under Hebbel's direction, and has since been performed in various places, always with great success.

These works must decidedly be ranked among the foremost of Robert Schumann's artistic creations, but they already betray the decline of that critical ability which had hitherto formed an essential and important factor in his total development. As E. T. A. Hoffmann fell a victim to those weird powers which he himself created, and which finally gained sway over him, so, too, Schumann gradually yielded to the romantic hobgoblin whose vaporous shadows ever more surely hid the wondrous radiance of his romantic world, until all definite shape and form were finally lost. His imagination then wandered aimlessly and planlessly through romantic infinity, vainly seeking an intelligible image, "even were it only a sweet, strange melody." This new phase in the master's growth is shown by his choice and treatment of the story of "Genoveva" as the subject of an opera, as also by his peculiar handling of the text to "Manfred." Calm, objective criticism would have achieved very different results. Outwardly, too, this lack of conscious and self-assured critical power is apparent in the restless haste with which

the master is now driven from one department of musical composition to another, and from one form to another.

It is with great difficulty that we discover that inward coherence which is so plain in his earlier works; still less readily can we trace that consistent development which makes each of his earlier works seem like one link in a chain. Few, indeed, are the works which now proceed from an innate necessity; the majority are inspired from without, often merely by an activity to a certain degree mechanical, and delighting in the technical skill which had been acquired. Thus decay set in, not gradually, but unevenly and irregularly. Certain individual works only of this period stand out pre-eminent, as witnesses of his now fading powers of creation, and these not seldom stand side by side with monstrous shapes, such as the awkwardness of the youth with his wealth of intentions could never have imagined.



## CHAPTER VII.

## SHATTERED POWERS. THE TRAGIC END.

A HABIT of reflection seems to be the most essential factor in Schumann's development as thus far considered. It is a habit with which he has been often and most unjustly reproached. In our age especially, an idea has gradually gained ground that a habit of reflection is fatal to all fresh and genuine power of poetic production, and many people explain the sterility of the present day by the fact that this habit has gained the upper hand in all artistic creation; as if the poetic faculty, a wholly original and substantial intellectual gift, could be destroyed or even impaired by any power of consciousness only negatively related to actual creation.

Reflection, of course, can only breed a scanty growth of artistic products from a dry, unfruitful soil. But where reflection is merely the light shining in upon the rich mental store; where it is simply the forming element which lies between the unchanging substance of the poetry and that particular shape which every age and every race understand and require; where it fixes the most distinctive work of consciousness, like the spirit which hovers over the waters of unfolding life, or orders the dark world of formless images, calling them from their dim depths to the height of a separate conscious existence; in cases like these it is

not only requisite to the formal process of production, but it first gives art its true significance, especially as it reveals to us as a direct and palpable certainty the heights which the spirit of man in his present state of development has scaled.

Whenever reflection deals merely with technicalities, it is barren and of little profit to genuine art-forms. It is only necessary, and only attains historical and monumental importance when it leads to the interior-reconstruction of a form or a great work of art. When this is the case, reflection yields a most novel, as well as a necessary and essential influence. The creating artist must stand face to face with the idea which he desires to clothe in artistic shape, and must work it into perfect clearness and transparency; he must study it thoroughly with clear and unbiassed eyes, if he would copy its exterior.

But this lucid vision can be acquired only by the aid of reflection. The poet who has not learned to control his emotion so that he can, as it were, stand outside of it, can never give it adequate form; the artist, in whose imagination perfect clearness does not prevail, can never create out of it a work of art fully expressive of himself.

When Schumann strove to view his own mind in the double image of Eusebius and Florestan, when he tried by means of outward phenomena to give form and shape to his imagination, he did it in order to obtain the utmost knowledge possible in regard to the processes of his own mind, and to make a plastic copy of its working.

To this reflective activity we owe that series of his most marvellous, profound, and imaginative compositions which we have hitherto considered. Thus, even at the inception of the work of art, reflection appears in complete artistic activity, and this naturally increases in the actual execution.

It is one of those truths oftenest misinterpreted or misunderstood, that the meaning itself creates the special form in which it is to be presented to the world. Of course every individual meaning has its corresponding form, but this form is born spontaneously and with naïve simplicity in the public mind.

The artist who grasps his meaning more profoundly and individually will generally take longer time to sift and weigh the various means of presenting it, and the particular arrangement best adapted to that especial meaning. This process will be shorter in proportion as the meaning gains clearness and the artist's control of his material increases, but a perfect art-work can hardly be conceivable without the habit of reflection.

If farther proof were needed, it might be found in abundance in the works of our best masters. Even that master in whose work native simplicity apparently predominated over reflection affords a striking confirmation of our views. We readily admit that Haydn's greatest works show little trace of the influence of reflection, but this admission is more than counterbalanced by the vast mass of his other and less important compositions. Practical work enlightened him more surely than reflection in regard to his own plans and purposes.

To Schumann the share which reflection takes in creative genius was a necessity, because the novel meaning which he was called upon to echo and to shape demanded an expansion and transformation of old forms and a reshaping of new ones, and that at the very time when he was still but little conversant with the old forms and the means of presenting them.


The chief problem in our description of his evolutionary process has been to show the mode by which he gradually gained complete dominion over the instruments and forms



of the new school. A fresh proof of this is afforded us in the great critical vigour with which he corrected and revised certain works before their publication, as well as new editions of his older works.

We have already frequently referred to this fact. The D minor symphony, not finished until 1851, was begun in 1841; the Finale to Op. 52, composed in 1841, was entirely rewritten in 1845, and we all know how many years he spent upon the music to "Faust."

The changes in the later impressions of the "Papillons" are unimportant corrections of single notes, and the memorandum, "The clamour of the carnival dies away. The tower clock strikes six," in Finale No. 12, over the six-times

repeated  is only a hint for closer compre-

hension of the meaning.

Op. 5, on the contrary, "Impromptus sur une Romance de Clara Wieck, dédiés à M. Friedrich Wieck," was thoroughly revised before the appearance of the second edition (in 1850, with a German title, the dedication being omitted). Two numbers (Nos. 4 and 11 of the old edition) the master considered unworthy even of revision; he suppressed them and wrote a new one in their place (No. 3 of the new edition).

The change in the close of the "Impromptus" in the new edition shows us how fully formal shape became a prime necessity to the mature master.

In the first edition, the end is ingenious in intention only, but awkward in execution:

*ritardando poco a poco.*

while in the second edition the ingenious meaning of the work is given, not only with greater depth and richness, but also with far greater art as regards the form :

*Nach und nach langsamer.*

Even so the corrections in the second edition (published in 1852-53) of Op. 13 and 14 are founded on the more mature perception which distinguishes the master from the youth. Here again two variations are omitted (3 and 9), and an episode in the Finale (twenty bars) is cut out. We

have already spoken of the individually important changes in Op. 14. The new edition contains still further improvements, the most noteworthy being the combination of every two bars in the Finale, and the alteration of the time from 6-16 to 2-4.

With the increasing mastery which Schumann thus gained over musical *technique*, the desire to solve unusual problems by its aid also grew apace, finally leading to a use of it more in conformity with custom. His genius soon merely sought a field of work, without pausing to inquire whether it were a favourable one or no. If space were but granted him for the display of his technical skill, he instantly occupied that space regardless of the especial nature of the soil.

His kindling and procreative reflection soon changed to a more mercenary calculation, or else it was lost in half unconscious toying with cloudy and unsubstantial images. It was only where he still felt himself under the influence of the older forms which he had metamorphosed, that he now continued to reveal the old power, full of genius to create and skill to mould.

The other works of this period are, for the most part, confused and destitute of form, because he was no longer able to see in all their clearness and glorious perfection those pictures of his imagination from which these compositions were derived. Before he had yet attained to that perfect clearness of vision, the images were translated into sonorous tone-forms, his technical skill thus gaining such control that the fanciful sporting with splendid metaphors often became a dry and (not seldom) utterly unattractive application of musical expedients.

His imagination ceased to be sufficiently brilliant and luxuriant to animate and spiritualize his *technique*, and he himself being equally incapable of developing and ordering



it in harmony with distinct objective principles, many things strike us as wild and confused, which might have assumed an artistic form at least, had the case been different.

Even in the "Weihnachts Album" (Op. 68), this incongruity between the idea and its formal mould is grievously felt.

Schumann writes of this work to Reinecke (Oct. 6, 1848): "I composed the first piece in the Album for our eldest child's birthday, and one thing followed another in this way. I felt as if I were beginning my life as a composer anew. Here and there too, you will see traces of the old humour. It is entirely different from the 'Kinderscenen.' Those are retrospective glances by an older person and for older people, while the 'Weihnachts Album' contains foreshadowings and presentiments of future events, for the young."

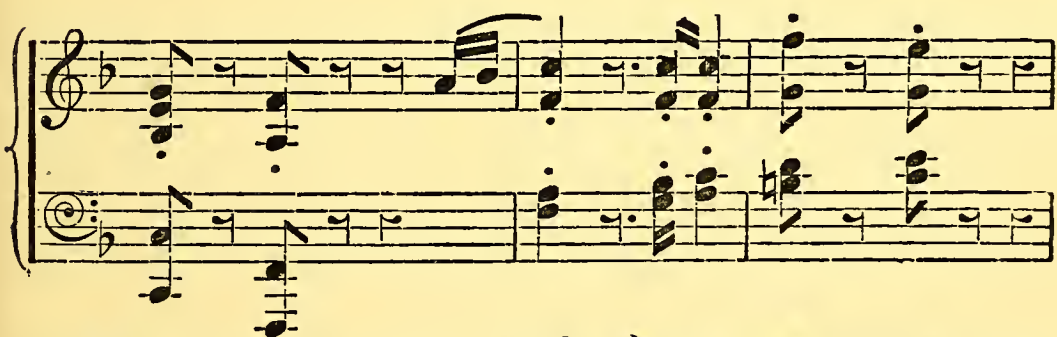
To us, the most marked difference between the two works is that the "Kinderscenen" seems irresistibly inspired by plainly recognizable, definite ideas, while the various pieces in the "Album" are either borrowed from external events, as "Soldatenmarsch," "Wilder Reiter," &c., or arise from such vague and general conceptions that they cannot interest us very deeply, such as "Armes Waisenkind," "Kleiner Morgenwanderer," "Weinlesezeit," and "Winterzeit."

With perhaps one exception (No. 28, "Erinnerung"), which bears the date of the day after Mendelssohn's death (Nov. 4, 1847), they all show the entire method of expression of the new school, but not its deeper meaning. They are far more the product of *technique* than of a really cogent meaning. In the "Soldatenmarsch" (No. 2), Schumann borrows so literally from the first part of the Scherzo of Beethoven's F major Sonata (for piano and violin, p. 24), that his march seems a mere translation of that movement from 3-4 to 2-4 time:

BEETHOVEN.



SCHUMANN.





The old fervour is found only in this No. 28, and those destitute of special title, Nos. 21, 26, and 30, are most closely akin to it. In the other numbers we can see little more than a successful attempt to transfer the new *technique* and the new pianoforte style to the domain of what were known as easy "Piano Exercises." From this point of view the "Album" has a higher significance than most of the other piano compositions of this period.

The "Bilder aus Osten," "six impromptus for the piano, for four hands" (Op. 66), was a product of the same soil, although *technique* is once more spiritualized by a distinct meaning; the richer media here employed are once more subservient to distinct ideas, and we recognize an important ethical meaning, as well as masterly *technique*.

The same cannot be said of the "Waldscenen" (Op. 82), five of which were written in 1848, the other four during the following year. With the exception of possibly two—"Jägerlied" and "Abschied"—they may be classed with the "Weihnachts Album," although they fail to be of equal technical interest.

Vague and uncertain as the images and ideas are upon which the composer's imagination rests, as "Verrufene Stelle," "Herberge," and "Jäger auf der Lauer," the Schumann of earlier years would have produced very different tone-pictures from them, the forest would have been thronged with far more marvellous figures than we now encounter. The picture or the striking situation which



hover before him produce merely a motive, seldom very characteristic, which he works out generally in the manner predetermined by his earlier works, without any effort to gain a closer grasp of the object which inspired it.

In the composition in question, plan and proportion are still evident ; his *technique* does not begin to be confused and irregular until we reach the "Marches" (Op. 76), written amid the storms of the year 1849. In his attempt to expand his *technique* still farther, he was necessarily led to commit enormities, because he had neglected to make his new *technique* perfectly plain and clear to himself theoretically and according to distinct objective principles.

Hitherto he had extended his system under the sway of definite ideas only, and when these forsook him, his *technique* too could not fail to suffer, when he tried to expand it. The march form, which is already definitely prescribed, is no longer to be recognized even in its outlines. The rhythms are thrown together in the same motley confusion as the harmonies and melodies.

In No. 3 ("Lager-scene") particularly, the master's creative hand wanders as blindly and as aimlessly as his imagination. His newly-found constructive power seems to fail him already. He wins the same perfection of form, if not the same directness of invention as in past times, only in those cases where he confines his fancy to simpler forms, as in the compositions for piano and some solo instrument ("Adagio and Allegro" for horn and piano, Op. 70 ; "Five Easy Pieces in Popular Style" for piano and violoncello, Op. 102 ; "Phantasiestücke" for clarinet and piano, Op. 73 ; "Three Romances" for oboe and piano, Op. 94 ; or the "Kinderstücke" for four hands, Op. 85), all of which date from the year 1849.

The political storms of that year, which stirred him so deeply that he called it his "most frightful year," may

well have had much to do with this fact. But they can be held responsible only for the great haste with which he now wrote—"in composition only he now found a counter-balance to the terrible irruptions from without." Still, this new condition was plainly grounded upon his entire development, and soon appeared with destructive power in his vocal style also. We saw that he was not wholly successful in that field even in the time of his highest ripeness. Labouring constantly as he did to reconcile his instrumental with his vocal style, rather than to appropriate to his own uses the polyphonic vocal style developed to great perfection during previous centuries, he was often induced grievously to interrupt that melodic flow which is the prime requisite in vocal composition.

This fact became more marked in proportion as *technique* gained control over his feeling as well as his imagination. In his vocal works with instrumental accompaniment, the latter was forced to atone for many an inequality in the vocal part, as in Rückert's "Advent Song," for soprano solo, chorus, and orchestra (Op. 71), also written in 1848. In a letter to Strakerjan, Schumann very beautifully says of sacred music, that "to apply his powers to sacred music is the artist's highest aim. But in youth we are all very firmly rooted to earth, with its joys and sorrows; in old age, the twigs tend upwards. And so I hope that that day may not be too far distant from me." At all events he was guided by correct knowledge when, on turning his attention to sacred music, he chose to set the sacred song of a modern poet instead of the authorized words of the church. His later attempts with the text of a "Mass" and a "Requiem" fully prove how hard it was for him to change his style to suit such words. Rückert's verses were far better adapted to his powers, and even if he lost the religious aroma which envelops the poem in his

effort to do justice to each individual trait, the composition is still the outcome of a genuine and pious emotion, lacking nothing but inward concentration and cohesion. The fundamental feeling was more than ever lost in the diligent representation of detail, and the devout, inspired sentiment is so little subdued by the presence of the Lord, that it is expressed by a confused interchange of harmonies and rhythms, and even by 5-4 time. The "Motet for Double Male Chorus, with Organ Accompaniment" (Op. 93), is even more extravagant and bewildering.

In his choral compositions he now usually sacrificed choral tone to the entire choral polyphony against which he had hitherto striven. When he sustained the soprano melody by a tenor solo in octaves in the ballad written for a mixed chorus, "The King of Thule" (from Op. 67), it was hardly more than an artistic caprice, which did not so much promote the genuine ballad note which it produced, as it checked the natural development of the work. A leading of voices like the following:

Sopran.  
Alt.  
Tenor-Solo.

Tenor.  
Bass.

The musical score is presented in two systems. The first system shows the vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor-Solo, Tenor, and Bass) and the instrumental accompaniment. The vocal parts are written on staves with a treble clef for Soprano and Alto, and a bass clef for Tenor and Bass. The instrumental accompaniment is shown on a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The key signature has three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The second system continues the vocal and instrumental parts, showing a more complex rhythmic and harmonic structure.



may be instrumentally justified on the score of individual exigency; it is, however, most reprehensible in a vocal choral composition, which confines individuality within definite limits, both as regards the idea and its natural construction. And of this quality are the choral composition in the second part of the "Ballads" (Op. 75), and that in the "Ballads and Romances for Female Voices" (Op. 69 and 91). In the struggle to obtain any sort of specific colouring of the choral tone, the inmost organism is often injured, and the natural development of the different parts, always a prime condition of vocal composition, is disturbed. The aid of the male chorus is invoked in "Schön Rohtraut," to mark a single passage: "Was siehst mich an so wonniglich? Wenn du das Herz hast, küsse mich," by a peculiar choral tone, an effect which might have been reached quite as appropriately, and at least more fully in the sense of the original form, by a mixed chorus. The original form is not, however, so greatly marred in this instance, as in the later songs for a single voice with pianoforte accompaniment.

The "Lieder für die Jugend" (Op. 79), which were written during this year, were really his last productions in this domain which were perfect in form. We may say of them as of the "Jugend Album," that the master merely simplified his style to accommodate it to the more limited dimensions, without giving us any deeper insight into the childish soul, as was his former fashion in the "Kinderscenen." Certain of these songs, however, are superior to the rest. All the two-part songs in the third series, and, in the first series, particularly the two "Zigeunerliedchen" and "Sandmann," with "Marienwürmchen," "Des Sennen Abschied" and "Schneeglöckchen," soar far above the other mere productions of technical skill, and form really complete little works of art.

Most of the songs in the first division, on the contrary, strike us as attractive from a technical standpoint only; in "Des Knaben Berglied," the "Buben Schützenlied" (Mit dem Pfeil und Bogen), and the "Lied Lynceus des Thürmers," *technique* so predominates that the actual meaning is scarcely to be recognized. But in "Mignon" the lyric form is utterly abandoned. The voice wanders about aimlessly declaiming, the pianoforte accompaniment being tolerably rich, but by no means organically developed. Schumann applied the recitative-like lyric style, appropriate to Heine's songs, to Goethe's verses also, and of course completely ruined their ideal beauty of form, which seems a sin against the poet. Since from this time forward he generally used this song style, he was no longer able to write songs corresponding to his high sense of the value of this form. In neither the "Spanische Liederspiel" (Op. 74), made up of Spanish popular songs, the "Minnespiel" (Op. 101), with words from Rückert's "Liebesfrühling," or the "Spanischen Liebesliedern" (published as Op. 138), did he succeed in again reaching that conciseness of form together with profound and exhaustive characterization, which made him one of the foremost exponents of the song. The "Spanische Liederspiel" shines and shimmers with the most marvellous splendour of southern colouring, but this cannot for an instant blind us to the want of a really definite meaning. The German "Minnespiel" lacks this glow; it is for the most part dry and technical.

The songs and lyrics from Goethe's "Wilhelm Meister" (Op. 98) take no higher rank. Schumann undoubtedly knew Franz Schubert's setting of these songs, and if he provided them with a new musical frame in spite of this fact, it shows that he had a different conception of them, but it also proves how vague he had now become in regard to his task; how much more commonplace and purposeless

his creations now were. Schubert's music to these Goethe songs is so perfect that any attempt to alter it must prove a failure, particularly when the poet's form is so little regarded as is here the case. Like "Mignon," all the songs are to be declaimed merely, nor is there even that inward concentration of the recitative-like lyric style which Schumann perfected in the songs of Heine. The voice throughout moves in phrases and flowery flourishes as needless intrinsically as they are extrinsically, and the piano accompaniment strives to interpret indeed, but not even feebly to unite these separate phrases.

The ballad of the "Harper," especially, makes an uncomfortable impression in its new frame. If it was folly to set these songs to music again at all, we must also consider the strange fashion in which it was done as specially unfortunate, and, as we have already said, a sin against the poet. The "Requiem for Mignon," on the contrary (Op. 98B), written for solos, chorus, and orchestra, shines forth pre-eminent among this series of less satisfactory songs. Here again the outwardly more decorative element was undoubtedly the attraction to the composer; but he never lost or forgot the homogeneous portrayal of the genuine ethical pith of the thing in the faithful care with which he worked that element out in music, and the work therefore stands fully on a level with his most mature productions. It was first performed at Düsseldorf, November 21, 1850.

The peculiar tone of the instrument again guides him in the "Five Hunting Songs for Male Voices and Four Horns" (Op. 137), and in the "Concerto for Four Key Bugles" (Op. 86). The "Four Songs for Soprano and Tenor" (Op. 78), Hebbel's "Nachtlied, for Chorus and Orchestra" (Op. 108), but more notably Byron's "Hebrew Melodies," are again chiefly treated in that recitative-like lyric style in which he was now so much at home, that he



did not hesitate to take the final step and treat Hebbel's "Schön Hedwig" (Op. 106), and later on the ballads of the "Haideknaben," and Shelley's "Fugitives," in melodramatic fashion.

We have already stated our opinion of the necessity for melodramatic treatment. We then, however, declared it admissible whenever mental conditions not revealed in words, perhaps purposely disguised, are to be disclosed; or when some essential decorative element is to be supplied, as in the case of a concert performance of "Manfred." Melodramatic treatment of the ballad, therefore, seems wholly incorrect. The accompaniment cannot elevate and uphold the declamation; each rather impairs the effect of the other. The *singing voice* alone blends organically with the instrumental tone, so that each enhances the other; but the *speaking voice* contrasts far too sharply with it to do so. The ballad should, therefore, always be treated in the manner established by Carl Löwe, and amplified by Schumann, as we have already shown.

The following year (1850) gave us a few songs (Op. 77, 83, 89, 90), in no way superior to those of the preceding year; a "Concerto for Violoncello" (Op. 129) which, like the "Concert-Allegro for Piano and Orchestra" (Op. 92), contained all the defects mentioned in reference to the "A minor Concerto," as well as many fine features; and another work of monumental importance, the "Symphony in E flat major" (Op. 97), first performed, under the composer's own direction, at Düsseldorf, on the 6th of February, 1851.

In the late summer of 1850 he had been invited to become the municipal director of music in Düsseldorf, and this change in his outward circumstances exercised the most favourable influence upon his productions. This is particularly noticeable in the third symphony, to which we

have just alluded. The fourth movement was directly inspired by the festivities on the occasion of the preferment of the Archbishop of Geissel to the see of Cologne; in Schumann's own words, he "preserved the character of a solemn ceremony in the accompaniment." This symphony is a fresh proof that he was still able to recover his old power of construction whenever he worked under the influence of a distinct and clearly conscious idea, or of a plainly defined form. Here these are both to be found. The outward circumstances which inspired the work are so sharply impressed upon it that it may well be called the "Rhenish" symphony. In form, however, it is borrowed wholly from its predecessors. To be sure, the prelude to the first part of the allegro is made very boisterous by the prevailing syncopation, disturbing the stately character of the composition, but the motives are more elevated and are developed with greater naturalness than is the case in any but the best of his earlier works. The conclusion of this first part does not return to the key of the dominant, but to its parallel key; the movement does not make the natural change to B flat major until towards the end; and as it again takes the dominant (D major) of the parallel key (G minor) for its point of support, the second movement also opens in a different way than before. That peculiar process of harmonization also, which we were able to establish in all previous compositions, is not absent, but only more deeply conceived, and the outlines of the symphony form seem throughout to be arranged more firmly and more surely in accordance with the old enduring laws—not destroyed, but only more freely and richly constructed. We see that the actual world had a far larger share in the formative process of this symphony than it had in the case of the earlier orchestral works; this being more marked in the "Scherzo" (in C major), which

depicts solid, actual life, not an imaginary existence, as the other movements do. The form is borrowed from the old minuet rather than from Beethoven's "Scherzo," so that it really seems as if some scene among the people must have hovered before our master's eyes—a scene which he re-created with peculiar brilliancy, in more than twenty bars, on a pedal note.

Moreover, while elsewhere he usually gives his scherzos two trios to display with versatility his individual conception of the nature of humour, in this symphony the scherzo is destitute of trio—in a word, it is simply developed from single motives. The third movement (A flat major) proceeds from the same or a kindred conception; it is merely marked, "not fast." The arrangement and the sentiment expressed are such as to enhance the scherzo to a certain extent.

We have already referred to the fourth movement; its connection with the last movement of all (E flat major) is unmistakable, being sharply marked even outwardly. So, too, even the outward arrangement of the various movements shows us that this symphony was derived from a conception totally unlike those which inspired the earlier works of the kind, particularly that in C major. In the latter one key is retained throughout, the separate movements simply presenting it in ever new fashion, and this we held to be perfectly legitimate for an imaginative mind which worked only in the world of romance. Here, where the imagination takes possession of the actual tangible world, and steeps it in its magic spells, the external order becomes more varied. E flat major, C major, A flat major, and E flat major are the leading keys which are firmly impressed upon the various movements.

In this symphony Schumann took a fresh step forward, withdrawing from the world of romance, which was but



narrow and limited for all its splendour, although he unfortunately left it for a brief space only. He had lived and worked in it far too long; its charm was far too potent for him, and wrought out his tragic doom at last.

Significant and valuable as are the overtures to the "Bride of Messina" (Op. 100), and to "Julius Cæsar" (Op. 128), both finished in 1851, when compared with most works of this period, yet they too prove that the master's sight was already too much dazzled by the romantic glory of his pictures to see forms and images in clear outlines through the dimness of his magically inspired fancy. The overture to the "Bride of Messina," with its rich and flowing second theme, is a glorious night-piece, but hardly an adequate overture to the drama with which Schiller aspired to revive the antique tragedy.

The master was now merely stirred by his subject; he could no longer grasp it with the old power to transmute it into musical tone-pictures in his fancy. For this reason, too, the chamber music composed during the year, such as the two "Sonatas for Pianoforte and Violin" (Op. 105, in A minor, and Op. 121, in D minor), and the third Trio (Op. 110, in G minor), rank higher.

In them all the old glow of emotion breaks forth afresh, although it is already overpowered and is only still held in restraint by the old form, which the composer does not here attempt to destroy or even to expand. It rather affords him the frame, the concise setting, in which he works out the motives originated in his most individual manner. For this very reason we have no interpenetration of form and substance. The one seems imperfectly moulded, the other not thoroughly real and vivid. We saw how the meaning acquired specific tendency from the form in similar works written at his highest maturity, and how this was again modified thereby, so that form and meaning grew into one solid organism.

In these works the meaning seems to be arranged and elaborated more in accordance with a distinct scheme. The overture to "Hermann and Dorothea" is incontestably the weakest work of this year, and probably of the master's whole artistic production; even the songs in Op. 107 and 125, and those published as Op. 103, 104, 107, and 119, show stronger traces of the old skill, although they are treated in the same manner as the songs of the previous year. The "Ballscenen," "nine characteristic compositions for four hands" (Op. 109), and the three "Phantasiestücke" (Op. 111), on the other hand, are much more valuable.

Even at this time, saddened by the gradual failure in his power of construction, Schumann still managed to retain the old mastery of form. The "D minor Symphony," as already stated, was only completed in its revised form during the course of this year. Already planned and executed in 1841, it contains all the excellencies of his best work.

Schumann's setting of Moritz Horn's fairy tale, "The Pilgrimage of the Rose," affords an irresistible proof of the slight discrimination which he now exercised in his choice of a subject. The poem is so bare and meaningless that we can hardly imagine, even from the standpoint of the restless, feverish musician, how he could try to give it oratoric importance by his music.

The man who had hitherto refused to allow even the simplest composition to flow from any but a distinct idea, who constantly strove to enter into relations with some distinct movement of the heart or the imagination, here grasped at a poem utterly destitute of any rational fundamental idea, and so arbitrary in execution, so tasteless in parts, that the musical inspiration it offered could never have moved any other composer to set it to music.

We also found fault with the text to "Genoveva," but only because the action seemed to us ill adapted to the stage, and

because the motives inspiring the subject were too commonplace. The story of the "Pilgrimage of the Rose" is strangely vapid. It does not treat of the adventures of a "rose," but of the most ordinary events in the life of a beautiful girl, who merely betrays her origin through the rose which "was never to fall from her hand." Any other plant seized with love's longing, aye, any stone, might feel much the same, if the elfin princess had bewitched it. The treatment of the story is quite as trite and conventional as the whole plot, so that the composer is merely offered an opportunity to create a few characteristic compositions, which are neither very spirited or very profound, but are marked rather by their decorative qualities.

The opening song is a fresh and charming hymn to spring. In point of melody, particularly, it rises far above the other songs of this period, and moves with such freedom and unconstraint, written as it is in strictly canonic style for two voices, as we do not often find in Schumann's work. When it changes into three parts in the last two strophes, the harmonic, sonorous element again prevails. The elfin choruses are most characteristically executed. Although labelled as being written for three parts, they are usually kept to two parts. The second soprano and alto progress mostly in unison. Neither the tone of the alto or of the soprano now satisfied the master for the lower part; he required some novel colouring, which he acquired by blending the two voices. He had no less dazzling tints with which to paint the woodland breezes and odours; and the male chorus, "In the Thick Wood," executed with great effectiveness, has become one of his most popular compositions. He also succeeded in rendering with masterly skill the feeling of hearty good-will that pervades the bridal songs, "Why sound the horns so gaily?" and



“And now at the Miller’s.” Here he had only to choose from the rich treasury of his resources, which were then combined at his touch according to the guidance of the text. The duet, “In the smiling valley, ’mid the trees so green,” may also be mentioned as a product of the same soil.

The prevalent tone of the work is determined by these purely decorative choruses and songs. The incidents which call for profound psychological development are very rare, and are treated by the poet in hackneyed phrases and with great superficiality. In the first part there is only the “Grave Song,” which Schumann sang in a moving style with the simplest method.

The quartet “Oh, joy! foretaste of Heaven’s rest!” in the second part, might have inspired a spiritual ensemble movement, if the words taken from the wretched libretto were less inadequate. We can see that it was utterly impossible for Schumann to give them any deep meaning. There thus remains but one number in this part in which a spiritual feeling finds expression, namely, the duet, “I know a blushing rosebud.” All the rest are mere words, and Schumann treated them accordingly. There was nothing for him to do here but to make music for the text, without farther mental emotion. At the time when he was still comparatively unfamiliar with the *technique* of composition, when he must first be stirred to write by some definite meaning, such a task would have been impossible to him. Now he was in complete possession of all the appliances of music, and could use them without any profound mental stimulus. The work was first given to the public at Düsseldorf, Feb. 5, 1852.

The same creative impulse, more a habit than an instinct, which hid the essential defects of this poem from Schuman’s critical eye, also led him at last to arrange Uhland’s

ballads, "The King's Son" (Op. 139), and the "Luck of Edenhall" (Op. 143), together with Geibel's four ballads, "Of the Page and the King's Daughter" (Op. 140), for solo voices, chorus, and orchestra.

Only the most entire misapprehension of the nature of the ballad could have moved him to make these experiments. This treatment is the one perfectly adapted to the epic. Lyric and dramatic alternate in it, and music has rich means of representing both. Therefore the epic of "Paradise and the Peri" is a most suitable subject for oratoric treatment, and so, too, is the "Pilgrimage of the Rose," apart from its slight merit. But the "ballad" is a purely lyric form, more nearly allied to the song than to the epic. Like the epic, it sometimes introduces actual personages, sometimes dialogue; not directly, however, but always in narrative form. This occurs more frequently in the ballad than in the romance, to be sure, but still the chief object in the ballad is to portray a particular mood, which employs the narrative form merely for its expression. Therefore it always appears in the forms of lyric song, and the popular ballad of the earliest ages, especially in England and Germany, make great use of the *refrain*, which contains a reflex feeling inspired by the narrative, its regular recurrence being meant to keep that feeling continually present. Artistic poetry also retains the lyric song-form in the ballad; but musicians discovered the varying appropriate musical treatment which we have already described. For symmetrically flowing narrative they choose a simple rhetoric melody; this forms the ground tone, which, modified melodically as well as harmonically and rhythmically in the course of the action, decides the value and also the execution of certain parts, and pervades the entire ballad as the refrain or as the ground tone of spoken melody does the narrative.

This is the treatment of the ballad based upon the most exact idea of form. Any other treatment detaches it from its peculiar field without giving it fresh artistic shape.

Reverence for the poet should have restrained Schumann from such arbitrary amplification, the more so that it entailed changes which were scarcely admissible from the poet's point of view. The oratoric treatment, and the travesties by Messrs. Pohl and Hasenclever which it necessitated, must always be held as an offence against the poet, even were they less awkward and unpoetic than they are. R. Pohl re-wrote the "Minstrel's Curse" in this fashion, and Hasenclever did the same for the "Luck of Edenhall." The two other ballads Schumann seems to have himself arranged.

Uhland's ballad of "The King's Son," which Schumann first set to music (1851), in its outward arrangement gives room for more oratoric treatment. It consists of eight romances, two of which are in the form of dialogue between the fisher and the youth. Still the whole thing is no more than a "cycle of romances," requiring no other musical treatment than that which we have already explained. Even the two romances in dialogue form to which we have alluded attain to no higher dramatic significance; the poet merely wished to indicate that the action, coming to a climax, moved him more powerfully than it had hitherto—that it now took living form in his fancy, and became actually present.

The alterations in the text found necessary by Schumann are unimportant until we reach the close, being confined to single words. The end, on the contrary, is wholly changed, and in our opinion most unpoetically so. The last verse of the ballad is broadened into a genuinely dramatic effect.

That which Uhland merely hinted, that the aged singer, "In light and blessedness his swan song sang," is here



realized, but only in the style of the court poets of the previous century.

The motley diversity introduced by this order of things, which completely disguises the original ballad tone, is still more increased by the fact that the composer entrusts the actual narrative, not to one voice, but alternately to a male and a mixed chorus, or to one or two choral parts, according to the various stages of the narrative. Delicately as he thereby succeeds in characterizing the story, and excellently as he contrives to throw the separate and apparently dramatic incidents in relief, the genuine ballad note which he so skilfully struck in his earlier works, without impairing the most refined characterization of the individual incidents of the action, is utterly destroyed here.

In the next ballad, "The Minstrel's Curse" (composed in 1852), this great defect is in some measure obviated by the introduction of the "narrator."

The libretto, as already stated, is by Richard Pohl. As at the close of the preceding ballad, so here, incidents which are only hinted in Uhland's poem are dramatically executed.

The first two verses are sung by the narrator faithfully to the original text; the third is greatly changed. The fourth verse is expanded into a lengthy dialogue between the harper and the youth, which introduces a motive not originally to be found in the ballad, essentially coarsens the fundamental idea, and completely destroys the noble flow of the story towards the close.

The narrator then takes up the fifth verse word for word as it stands in Uhland's ballad. After the scenic representation following next in order, in which the king and queen reveal their position towards the singer, in Pohl's words, and the harper and the youth sing a few verses of Uhland's "Rudello" and "Lied des Deutschen Sängers," amplified

by Pohl, the glorious sixth stanza of the original ballad is degraded to a mere theatrical effect. The king demands another song, and the harper sings Uhland's ballad, "Die Drei Lieder"! Upon this, the king looks grim, and the chorus make various sage remarks. But the queen is anxious to hear more, and the youth and harper accordingly sing a few more verses from Uhland's "Gesang und Krieg," which was written during the War of Independence, again expanded by Pohl. The chorus is powerfully affected, and the queen still more strongly moved; she shows her emotion in a few stanzas of Uhland's "Das Thal," altered of course to suit the occasion. Although the king breaks out in hot wrath upon this, she begs the singers to let her hear Uhland's song, "Entsagung," with which, strange to say, she is also quite familiar. She does not make this request without singing a little more of "Das Thal." The youth grants her prayer, but naturally gives the song with a few abbreviations, and the queen enthusiastically carries it to the end, upon which the youth, "forgetful of himself," strikes up Uhland's song of "Hohe Liebe." The catastrophe is then briefly hinted by king and chorus, and the farther course of the action follows Uhland literally. Who could, for an instant, fail to see that the preparation for the tragic issue, full of genius and poetry as it is, in Uhland's lines—

"They sing of spring and love, of happy, golden youth,  
Of freedom, manly worth, of sanctity and truth;  
They sing of all emotions sweet the human breast that move,  
They sing of all things high the human heart doth love.  
The courtly crowd around forget to sneer and nod;  
The king's bold warriors bow before their God;  
The queen, to pleasure and to melancholy willing prey,  
Down to the singers casts the rose which on her bosom lay;"—

is made highly comic by Pohl's patchwork, which has the true puppet-show ring. That Schumann should write

music to such text is ample proof of his slight present need of any more profound idea, and of the lack of critical faculty which he showed in choosing his theme, if it only offered him a few characteristic incidents. These are not wanting in the ballad in question, and he skilfully set them in relief.

The beginning is fine, quite in the oldest ballad style. The short instrumental introduction at once strikes the ballad note, and the narrator keeps it up with extreme delicacy and exquisite shading, wholly in the manner which we have recognized as being the only adequate one. But it is soon lost in the alternating song which follows between the harper and the youth, and even the narrator does not recover it in the original purity until towards the close. The rest of the work is only interesting through a few compositions such as the "Provençal Song," which produces an enchanting effect by its glow and sweet sentiment, together with its structural perfection. The ballad of the harper, also, "Die Drei Lieder," is equally fine, although the ballad tone is injured by the somewhat bewildering variety of the declamation. The youth's song, "Lausche, Jungfrau," also is full of power, becoming a terzet in which the queen and harper join.

The music is characteristically beautiful from the point where it begins to follow Uhland's text, and on to the close. The narrator catches the ballad note again (No. 12), and from this foundation the harper rises with his soul-stirring curse, and the chorus continue the ballad to the end. All the other numbers, even the choruses, are mainly treated in the more recitative style peculiar to Schumann, which, compounded of declamatory accents and melodic phrases, not infrequently depresses or distracts the hearer.

It is needless to speak more in detail of those ballads already mentioned, since they are marked by the same



glaring defects, when viewed from the same standpoint. These defects are indeed almost more apparent in the four Geibel ballads of "The Page and the King's Daughter," particularly in the first two. In these works not a single finished composition offers a necessary resting-point, and everything being declaimed in the aforesaid recitativo-melodic fashion, a lack of repose pervades both the songs and weakens the effect in an extraordinary degree. The third song is treated with more unity, the picture of the play of the nixies and the waves forming a central point of harmony. The last ballad is capitally handled. Schumann was still master of every musical means for representing the gay life of the ball-room, and the startling contrast at the end; and he still had the old power to give them shape. He places the whole terrible event directly before us with great delicacy and truth, from the merry wedding dance down to the tragic close.

Besides "Five Songs of Queen Mary Stuart" (Op. 135), devoid of all farther interest for us, he finished during the year 1852 a "Mass" and a "Requiem" (printed as Op. 147 and 148), in which he came somewhat nearer to sacred music than he did in his "Advent Song." The genuine ecclesiastical style, as our greatest musicians loved and practised it, shows vocal music notably in the highest polyphonic form. Thus only can it lose the material massiveness of tone, and become capable of interpreting the highest idea, the idea of God, to man. This idea is not to be recognized in the material, but in the way in which it is worked out. The Christian conception of life, from which the polyphonic style proceeds, is limited; it rises from the basis of fixed fundamental truths, to a glorious and wondrously wrought structure, in which it takes secular life wholly captive. To this the polyphonic vocal style also corresponds, a style created in the earliest ages, and brought to the highest

development by a series of gifted and God-inspired men. Everything merely harmonic or rhythmic, that is, sensuously attractive, is repugnant to this style; artistically blended voices are in it united to form an edifice fully as marvellous as the Christian conception of life.

Schumann's delay in adopting this style, and in making himself an adept in it, rendered him incapable of creating any work in the department of sacred music wholly worthy of his high reputation. Even had it been easier for him to accept the Christian conception, and to forget the finite relations of his rich inner nature, he would scarcely have been in a position to achieve anything of great value, because he was never thoroughly versed in the highest polyphony of the voice.

This style is not so essential a requisite of a mass for the dead as it is of most sacred music, universal human emotion outweighing the dogmas of the Church in such a composition. Schumann's "Requiem," therefore, ranks higher as religious music than his "Mass," which is really far superior to it in artistic merit. In both these works his peculiar style is seen only in the service of pious sentiment. The first movement of the Requiem, the "Requiem *Æternam*," is perfectly even and equable throughout. A succession of harmonies, ordered with the utmost delicacy, a simple, unadorned melody, and a rhythm which is somewhat lively for church music, a rhythm containing notes of the most various values, supported by an instrumentation not of the choicest, make this first chorus an individual, if not a deeply-felt litany and dirge. The "Te Decet," on the contrary, is somewhat dry. Having neglected to grasp and to interpret the text in any more profound sense, the composer was constantly embarrassed by the wealth of words. The "Kyrie," which comes next in order, is an original and intellectual composition, especially in its connec-

tion with the "Te Decet," and at the close. The weakest movement undoubtedly is the "Dies Iræ," with the "Quantus Tremor," and "Tuba mirum;" it does not even remotely approach the soul-stirring work of other musicians in its working-out, which is almost entirely in chords, even in the instrumental part. The ensuing movement also, "Liber Scriptus," does not rise above the merest commonplace; the "Quid sum miser, tunc dicturus," however, is full, not only of religious consecration, but also of individual inspiration in its agonized, stammering treatment, while it is, at the same timè, fitted together with artistic refinement.

In the "Recordare," allotted to the soprano solo, the composer's invention is again constrained by the wealth of words; instead of the aria appropriate here, he gives us a rather meagre cantus firmus, with an equally meaningless counterpoint in the string quartet.

No attention is, in general, paid to the aria form in this work; the "Qui Mariam absolvisti" is treated wholly as a song, visibly affecting the specific conception of the "Confutatis Maledictis;" we observe that the composer had no inadequate image of hell. The entire "Offertorium" is treated more polyphonically, but is in no way remarkable. The "Pleni sunt Cœli" in the "Sanctus," on the contrary, may be considered the most interesting thing in the entire Requiem, especially from the fact that the instrumentation rises somewhat above the hitherto almost exclusively sketchy style. The "Agnus Dei," too, is refined and interesting in conception, although still so sketchy in execution that we almost feel as if we were considering an unfinished work. Many things are barely hinted, particularly in the instrumentation, which Schumann certainly meant to complete later; many things would also have received a different setting from his correcting hand had he lived. And yet it is most interesting to note the way in which he subdued



and simplified his artistic style, which had been engendered by the most glorious pictures of his imagination, called up by the most brilliant and characteristic impressions, amid the mighty surge and overflow of his soul, that he might consecrate it to the service of religious emotion.

Such chaste reserve is not adequate for the "Mass," as Schumann evidently felt himself; he therefore conformed much more decidedly to the polyphonic vocal style in this than in any of his other works, although he did not do so with the consistency necessary to raise his music completely above the level of the merely decorative to a higher ethical value. His theme more than all else prevented him from so doing. With the great masters of old, the theme was usually the result of ideas and feelings but faintly and feebly to be expressed in words, and while they worked out this theme under the express influence of such ideas and feelings, the motives are included in the great structural unit in which the ideas take intelligible form. True to the spirit of his school, Schumann connected theme and sentiment in this composition; his themes seem to be *declaimed* rather than *sung*, and thus it became difficult, if not absolutely impossible, to work them out in the meaning and spirit of that high ideal found in all the old masters down to Beethoven. Themes like:



or



are not only too dry, but also too meagre for farther elaboration, despite their scarcely laudable lively rhythm.

The whole first movement is only interesting for its delicate harmonic treatment. In the "Gloria," too, the lively rhythm is to a great degree rendered necessary by the declamation:



The extremely effective harmonic treatment is not enough to give the movement the resplendence which the composer sought. The intermediate movements, on the contrary, seem to be deeply felt, "et in Terra Pax," and "Laudamus te," as well as the "Gratias." Whenever more universal human emotion is to be described, Schumann is in his own peculiar domain, and we can only regret that he did not grasp such moments more closely and carry them farther, as he did in the succeeding verses, from "Domine Deus, Rex Cœlestis," down to "Quoniam," the "Miserere nobis," particularly, finding genuinely devout and yet individually inspired expression. Side by side with these passages are others treated in the popular ecclesiastical style, showing that the writer evidently imagined himself to be in the midst of the praying congregation, the movement being therefore conceived in a more decorative fashion. The "Quoniam," on the other hand, is treated with much triteness until we reach the "cum Sancto Spiritu," which is animated, outwardly at least, by containing a cantus firmus, which upon its recurrence, always following a choral "Amen," is accompanied contrapuntally by one, two, and then three voices, being finally worked out by several voices at the close. The "Credo" is managed with greater care. The theme itself is treated almost wholly in the sense of the old dogma and the old style. Even the milder conception of Bach is in this in-

stance foreign to the younger master, who vies with him in equally powerful harmony only; and although he fails to cling to his motive with the consistency of the older master, he always strives to work it out in the same spirit and intention. The "Et Incarnatus est" and "Crucifixus" are most attractive; the composer is content to diffuse a mysterious twilight over the entire passage by means of marvellous chords, from which the "Et resurrexit" breaks forth with all the greater freshness and clearness. The Offertorium for organ and 'cello obligato is a composition of much beauty. The "Sanctus" is all sound—voices, wind, and part of the stringed instruments hold sustained chords, and the first violins and 'celloes execute a cantus firmus in addition to all this, so that we might imagine that some old painting in which the heavenly hosts, veiled in clouds, suddenly strike up the "Sanctus," had become an actual reality in Schumann's mind. From this frame of mind the "Pleni sunt Cœli" changes somewhat violently in its severe and purely declamatory setting, and neither the "Osanna in excelsis," nor even the "Benedictus qui venit," can recall it. We are not transported back to the "Sanctus" until we reach the "O salutaris hostia," which is treated in a tone of priestly prophecy, an "Amen" rich in inspiration and delicate in construction following after it.

Even the last number, the "Agnus Dei," shows us how easily the composer might have been enabled to display also the ecclesiastic style in the light of the new school, had a happier destiny permitted him to apply himself to the task before his powers of creation and construction had been impaired. The counterpoint, especially where it is used as an accompaniment figure in the alto:





is, indeed, rather of an instrumental than a vocal nature, but such rich and yet such deep religious feeling speaks to us from the entire work, that we are fain to confess this to be the true way to blend the two styles into one. We have here genuine romantic emotion pleading in devout contrition for mercy and for peace.

Thus here again we see confirmed that which we have already recognized as characteristic of this period, the fact that Schumann's imagination was no longer strong enough to give form and shape to its images; had it been otherwise he would have shown us in this Mass that silent communion of the saints, that invisible church, which the romanticists of the previous century strove to portray; nor was his emotion now sufficiently glowing or powerful to animate and renew the forms of the older ecclesiastical style, so that they might become the interpreters of modern Christian conceptions.

The overture to "Faust," composed in 1853, and completing a work to which we must give especial consideration, is the one of all Schumann's latest creations which particularly interests us.

To discuss the "Festival Overture" (Op. 123), "Seven Fugues for the Pianoforte" (Op. 120), "Sonatina" (Op. 118), the "Violin Fantasia" (Op. 131), "Concert Allegro" (Op. 134), "Kinderball" (Op. 130), "Märchenerzählungen: Four Pieces for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano" (Op. 132), "Songs" (Op. 114 and 133), or the "Romance for the Violoncello," written at the same date as the harmonization of Bach's "Six Violin Sonatas," 1853 and 1854, would merely be to repeat statements already made, since they

correspond closely to what we have already noted in regard to similar works of this period.

The completion of the music to scenes from Goethe's "Faust," on the contrary, is an event worthy of our utmost attention. Begun at the time of his maturity (1844<sup>1</sup>) various portions were finished in 1849,<sup>2</sup> 1850,<sup>3</sup> and 1853.<sup>4</sup> The first part was performed in Leipsic on the hundredth anniversary of Goethe's birth (Aug. 29, 1849). The entire work was first published after the composer's death (1858), nor did he live to witness the first performance of the complete composition, which occurred on Dec. 4th, 1862, in Leipsic, at the Gewandhaus, under the direction of Carl Reinecke.

Schumann's music does not refer so directly to the entire tragedy as does that of Prince Radziwill or Lindpaintner. Goethe from the first demands the co-operation of the sister art. Even if it be not absolutely necessary that Margaret's songs should be sung, still the broadest use of music, particularly of vocal choruses, is required in many passages. Schumann pays no heed to this; he sets to music only such things as especially move him, and among these are many which were certainly not meant by Goethe for musical treatment, such as No. 1, "Scene in the Garden," Faust's monologue, "Life's pulses now with fresher force awaken," and Faust's death.

If it was necessary to set the Garden Scene to music, which does not seem to be at all proven, it could hardly be done otherwise than as Schumann did it. He retained the dialogue form with much decision, and supported the declamation merely by the sharper musical accents, doing this with the same sweetness and variety which we find in his

<sup>1</sup> Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 7 of the third part.

<sup>2</sup> The first part, and No. 4 of the second part.

<sup>3</sup> Nos. 5 and 6 of the second part.

<sup>4</sup> The overture.

ripest works, so that it essentially heightens the prevalent emotion, the fluctuation between artless innocence and sensuality.

The orchestral accompaniment unites all these forces by a steady evolution; treated with rare tenderness, it notably enhances the expression of superabundant feeling. Here again Schumann's declamation is shaded with the utmost delicacy; the accents, to be sure, are somewhat bewilderingly grouped together, but they find the uniting impulse in the firmly constructed accompaniment, and from the reciprocal action of the two arises the fluctuation between repressed and outbreaking sensuality.

This kind of musical treatment seems far less appropriate for Margaret's song before the picture of the Mater Dolorosa. Here the poet found such apt artistic and poetic form for Margaret's agony and despair, that the composer should not have confined himself to learning the various notes of feeling from the text, heightening and fixing them in music, but should have reproduced the verse-structure also in music, as Schubert did in his setting of this song, which is, unfortunately, incomplete ("Posthumous Musical Poems," Part 29). Schumann generally limited himself to the verbal expression, so that it was constantly musically heightened in the most moving manner, but did not attain any really more artistic perfection.

The "Cathedral Scene" (No. 3 in Schumann's version), was also set to music by Schubert ("Posthumous Musical Poems," Part 20), and again far more in the spirit of the poem than by Schumann. For instance, Schubert does not conceive the "evil spirit" to be an actual personage, but rather "the voice of conscience," "the conflicting thoughts which torment Margaret's soul, and which she cannot escape."



Schumann personifies the evil spirit and represents him in actual converse with Margaret. In this way he gets a characteristic tone-picture, rich in imagery, and made still more powerful by the farther instrumental elaboration, and by the richer dress of the "Dies Iræ," arranged for four parts, and not for one, as by Schubert. But Schubert's arrangement suits the character of the poem better, particularly in so far as Margaret forms its central point. His omission of the phrase, "Neighbour, your smelling bottle," which Schumann uses, is also deserving of commendation.

No. 4, "Sunrise," down to Faust's monologue, "Life's pulses now with fresher force awaken," is executed with masterly skill. The musical remoulding of Ariel's song and the description of the hovering circle of spirits are equally successful. Everything is lavishly poured forth and yet is veiled in clouds, in a style of which no one but Schumann was capable. But he failed to find in the monologue any ethical meaning to which he could give musical form; he declaimed it in that wordy melodic fashion which soon wearies the listener.

The next number also (No. 5, "Midnight") loses its interest through the treatment of the dialogue, which is scarcely musical. The song of the three grey women is most characteristically treated, although it may not show any deep thought; but its effect is seriously impaired by the dialogue which follows between Faust and "Care."

The next number (No. 6, "Faust's Death") is thoroughly characteristic. Here, as in the best works of the kind, the accompaniment once more combines the separate and more declamatory parts into indivisible outlines. The song of the Lemurs and their work again affords the happiest field for Schumann's creative power. Faust's death is accompanied by affecting music.

The third part contains the most valuable numbers. Everything here is more decoratively treated, and the airy, incorporeal world of spirits in which this portion takes place, is most faithfully reproduced in the music, and is actually made visible to us in the first chorus of the holy anchorites, the vision governing the whole future development. The ensuing song of the "Pater Ecstaticus" (tenor solo) is chiefly conceived in the idea of soaring hither and thither. It breeds in the composer's imagination an accompanying figure corresponding to it, which is expanded to an instrumental movement to which voices are added only as characteristic recitation. Its rhythmic regularity depends less on the metre of the text than it does on this accompanying figure. This rhythmic monotony might easily have been avoided, if Schumann had imitated the verse structure as closely as he did in the songs of the "Pater Profundus" (No. 3, bass solo), of the "Pater Seraphicus" (baritone), and even in the chorus of celestial boys, who join in the latter song, which is full of simplicity and charm. The next number also is organically well constructed, yet in certain passages, as in the first chorus, there is something of a fall from the ideal sphere. At all events, the accompaniment should have been more largely resolved into figure work, and should not have been treated chiefly in chords; even the movement in triplets, which the chorus then strike up, does not quite transport us back to that exalted scene. The song of "Doctor Marianus" (baritone, No. 5) first restores us to that sphere; the angel choruses in the next number (6) are again derived from those radiant heights, showing somewhat of the artless fervour of old hymns to the Virgin, in contrast with which the "Incline, O maiden," of the penitent (Margaret) seems studied and unnatural.

Schumann left two versions of the closing chorus (Chorus

Mysticus), to the first of which we give the preference, because its more concise setting strikes us as more consistent with the character of the whole work, and more closely akin to the sublime introduction than the second version. To our mind, it corresponds far better to the requirements of a hymn in which the whole world is to join.

After all, Schumann did not really write his music to the various scenes from "Faust," with a view to a profound interpretation of them, for that would be possible in a limited sense only, but rather to illustrate them by all the apparatus which he had himself created for this purpose, and which was singularly fitted for the work. Wherever he approaches more closely to the thought as such, he becomes dryly recitative. The overture, therefore, cannot be ranked with any of his other overtures, least of all with the "Manfred Overture," to which it has the greatest ideal affinity. In the latter we found united all the contending elements of tragedy, its connection with the present work being thus plainly and surely apparent. The "Faust Overture" is merely an imaginative composition in which the errors and struggles of a mighty spirit are presented from an outward point of view; the final victory over the weird forms which appear as shadows and phantasms only, is expressed in the most commonplace fashion. In 1853, Schumann was no longer able to conceive of such a conflict in its separate incidents, or of the contending powers in all their grandeur. His artistic mission was fulfilled; his earthly mission, too, would soon be over.

The position in Düsseldorf, upon which he actually entered, Oct. 24, 1850, on which day he directed the first subscription concert, greatly gratified him, as we learn from a letter dated Aug. 9, 1851, but he held it until the autumn of 1853 only. We cannot say what especial motives led



the "officiating Committee of the Düsseldorf Musical Union" to suddenly strip so meritorious a master of his office as civic director of music. His talent for direction, to be sure, was but slightly developed, as was natural from his entire individuality, and his great inclination to silence made this defect still more noticeable. To this we may add the fact that in 1851, bodily ills again attacked him, assuming more and more alarming character as the months rolled on, so that he was forced to confine his participation in the Düsseldorf Musical Festival, held in August, to the narrowest limits. By constant and devoted care he did, indeed, so far recover as to resume his official duties, but various distressing symptoms, such as aural illusions, failing powers of judgment, and above all, great nervous excitement, gave his friends and relatives cause for serious fears. During a journey to the Netherlands, with his wife, in November, he had the great pleasure of finding that his music was "almost as familiar there as in the fatherland." "In every town," (he writes in a letter dated Jan. 17, 1854), "we were welcomed with delight, aye, with every mark of honour." Great performances of the symphonies, even the most difficult of them, the second and third, were everywhere given, and at the Hague, the "Pilgrimage of the Rose" was performed.

This was destined to be his last great happiness. After his return, he prepared his "Collected Writings" for the press, and worked on a collection of apothegms from the great poets and thinkers, all referring to music. But he was never to accomplish this task. As in the case of Hoffmann, the images with which he had once played, at last exerted a gloomy constraint upon his imagination. He lost the spell with which to exorcise them, and so fell an irretrievable prey to their mad measures. Soon, forgetting his finite limits, he felt himself in communion with

the spirits of the departed. Schubert and Mendelssohn, as he fancied, sent him a theme upon which Wasielewski states that he wrote five variations. Then the lucid intervals in which he was aware of his sad state, became less and less frequent, and the most loving care could not longer withhold him from his terrible fate. On the 27th of February, 1854, he escaped from the small circle of his family and friends, and sought to end his existence in the waters of the Rhine. He was rescued, but not restored to his family or his art. His condition was so hopeless that he was forced to go to the asylum kept by Dr. Richarz, at Endenich, near Bonn, where his friends were very seldom allowed access to him. On the 29th of July, 1856, he died in the arms of his faithful wife. His mortal remains were buried at Bonn, July 31, in the presence of numerous friends, a wife and seven children (three daughters and four sons), being left to mourn his loss.

Although he had not taken such deep root in the heart of the German people during his lifetime as had that other master who departed a few years earlier, yet the sympathy felt for his tragic doom was deep and universal. The number of those who knew what costly gifts he had laid at the nation's feet, and with what marvellous treasures he had endowed his country, was but small, yet the sad news everywhere awakened regret for a great man gone.

On February 21, 1871, his many admirers in Leipsic placed a marble tablet on the house in which he lived from 1840 to 1844—5 Inselstrasse—with this inscription in golden letters :

*“Here dwelt Robert and Clara Schumann, 1840-1844.”*

## CHAPTER VIII.

## SCHUMANN'S ARTISTIC AND LITERARY RANK.

HITHERTO, we have chiefly studied the master's individual growth and development. If we have repeatedly been obliged to refer to its more or less remote connection with the general progress of art, it has always been done with regard to Schumann's individual advance. Our main purpose has always been to establish the significance assumed therein by the isolated work of art. It now remains for us to consider somewhat more closely the position attained by Schumann in the universal development of art, in virtue of the sum total of his life work.

The significance of the creative artist is double. He enriches the art treasure of the nation by a series of original and perfect works of art, and at the same time he promotes the growth of universal culture. These two sides of artistic production are not so closely connected as might at first appear. *Monumental* art-works promote the growth of culture only. The growth of art is far oftener advanced by less important art-works of past periods, which it continues in the spirit and meaning of some distinct school.

Thus Bach's noblest compositions mark the perfection of the old artistic counterpoint and of the school which it governed; his less valuable instrumental works, the fantasias, suites and sonatas, inspired that new artistic style which first attained perfection in the hands of Haydn,



Mozart, and Beethoven. The real starting-point for the great achievements of these three masters, was, not the monumental product of the lord of German art, but those works in which he merely hinted and stimulated the new school. Beethoven's last works gave rise to that isolation of subjective feeling which reached its culmination in Schubert, Mendelssohn, and Schumann. They found the form and purport of modern music by following out the more concise forms of the song and bagatelle.

It therefore seems fit for us to give particular consideration, both to the product of the artist's toil and to its especial significance in the development of art. The musician acquires importance both as the executive artist, the virtuoso performer, teacher or director, and in so far as he strives to establish, by voice or pen, the purposes and plans, and the eternal structural laws of his art. In this connection we must once more review the works of Schumann.

The number of really monumental compositions of lasting value, such as will transmit his name to future generations, is not large; it could scarcely be large with his peculiar development. The most essential requisite for a composition which is to outlive its age, is artistic form, not a meaning. The meaning is variable, changing from generation to generation. The form alone remains perpetually the same, and is therefore intelligible to future ages as well, in its new and altered state. We can still fully understand the meaning far exceeding form, in many of the works of Schubert and Schumann, because it still finds a living echo in our souls. To coming ages with altered feelings, it will be a dead letter, because it is clothed in a form which is not universally intelligible. For the self-same reason we have no clear comprehension of, say, those examples of free and sequential melodies which have been

handed down to us, or of the melodies of the Minnesingers, while the popular ballads of past centuries are generally entirely intelligible to us, in spite of their different mode of thought and feeling. Sacred music of the time of the Reformation affects us far more powerfully and directly, than do even the best works of the Roman school; and yet the self-same glow of secular or sacred sentiment pervades them both, but it finds more exact expression in the one school than it does in the other.

We can attribute really monumental importance therefore, only to those works of Schumann in which he managed to give distinct form to some valuable poetic idea. The works of the first period, when he was still groping after this formal mould, and which require a knowledge of all the circumstances which inspired them, for their proper comprehension, and those of the last period, when he missed or purposely avoided the correct form, are of no importance except to his own development, scarcely even to men of his own age, who understand them only because the conceptions which led to their composition are still familiar and intelligible. His first works strike us in the light of studies, which helped him to create the style necessary for the portrayal of his own individuality. We saw that it was no slight task to evolve this style from the many styles of bygone centuries, Schubert, and in some sort Chopin and Paganini giving him merely the requisite impulse and inspiration. The new indwelling quality under whose cogent influence he placed himself betimes, was ever the chief factor in the work. That he might fully comprehend it, he tried to confine it wholly to definite mental or physical events; he concentrated his imagination upon distinct images and pictures that he might contemplate them the more clearly, and he then created compositions under their influence, which re-

produced the pictures of his imagination as in a mirror, and revealed in music the features of his spiritual life. He thus assumed an attitude opposed to the practice of his time, which left its impress upon his works, and gave rise to a series of compositions which we have called oppositional, but very few of which, of course, can have any lasting significance. The rest must necessarily lose their value, not because they are the immature work of youth, but because they do not express their meaning with the utmost plainness, and because they are not intelligible without all their contingent premises.

To understand the "Papillons," the "Intermezzi," "Impromptus," "Davidsbündler dances," and the "Carnival" completely, to comprehend their peculiar nature, we must first become thoroughly familiar with the inner or outer incidents which inspired them, and this the composer must facilitate by various hints apart from the actual composition. Even then, we can follow out the author's ideas only because they are among the prominent and tangible ideas of modern life. In an age when these are altered, it will be much harder, if not actually impossible to do so.

The case is very different with the sonatas of this period and with the "Phantasiestücke," which were merely suggested, not exclusively influenced by this same process; the musical form objectively found, so condenses the imaginary picture musically, that very little of that reflection which gave it birth, is transmitted to the musical reproduction, and it is expressed in a thoroughly musical manner with perfect clearness.

This is not equally true in regard to the sonatas, where the poetic meaning, ordered and condensed by reflection, still preponderates over form, and the memory at least, of that formative process is requisite to perfect comprehension. The "Phantasiestücke," "Kinderscenen," "Kreisler-



iana," and kindred works of this period, are the only compositions of enduring merit belonging to Schumann's first phase of development. They are equally full of flowery, brilliant, romantic life, but it is made manifest in perfectly concise, inwardly and outwardly rounded form. This form is not only justified and made intelligible by the particular meaning which it conveys, as is the case in most of his earlier and many of his later works, but the form goes far to reconcile us to the meaning, seeming to be merely an embodiment of it. It is produced by the compelling power of the idea of form, as well as by the sway of a definite meaning. In his earlier works, the special form or lack of form, was merely instigated by a meaning, which was not therefore actually embodied in it. In the works of which we are now speaking, it presses the form into its service, making it its harbinger and interpreter. In the first works, much of the meaning was lost perforce, which the interpretation lying outside the composition, necessarily supplied; in the later works, on the contrary, the meaning finds exhaustive expression, speaking for itself with the utmost clearness. Thus only can a work of art win more than merely temporal value; thus only can it gain lasting significance for all ages.

Those of Schumann's works in which he turned his attention to foreign and transmitted forms, filling them with fresh meaning, and thus renovating and renewing them, are incomparably more important. It is unnecessary to again enumerate the costly gifts with which he enriched the German nation's treasure of song. We have tried to show minutely how he taught the German spring-time of song, which blossomed anew in Heinrich Heine, Friedrich Rückert, Joseph von Eichendorff, Justinus Kerner, Nicolaus Lenau, Adalbert von Chamisso, Robert Reinick, Emanuel Geibel, and others, to bear musical

flowers and fruit. We have showed that he was the first to understand Heine aright, and to transmute his soul into music; we saw that he portrayed this poet's rich inner life with the most moving shades of feeling; we saw that he first gave form and sound to the bright-hued, fairy-like world in which Eichendorff's muse was born; we saw that he formed the same enchanting measures for Rückert's "Liebesfrühling" and Chamisso's "Frauenliebe und Leben," that he did for the more realistic conceptions of Reinick or Burns. These songs will never be forgotten while German lyrics and German song still live. They are treasures such as no other nation can boast, and they are so imperishable, that when centuries have elapsed, people will still take pride and pleasure in their unfading freshness. These songs alone would suffice to transmit Schumann's name for all time to future races.

We have also showed that he added new elements to choral song, turning them to good account in individual works of the kind, and also that he wrote single ballads, which might serve as models for all time. It is not their deep and wonderfully poignant sentiment and character which give these works their high and enduring value, deeply and powerfully as those qualities affect us, but it is the perfection of form achieved in them by the composer, which will transmit the full sweetness of this spring-time of song unimpaired to future ages, to whom the mere meaning could not be so directly apparent as to us. *This is the highest mission of art. It should EXPRESS the ideals of its own time, not through its artistic illustrative material only, for this would make these ideals intelligible to its own age alone; but art should PRESENT these ideals in plastic and eternally intelligible forms, so that they may be understood in all ages.* This mission Schumann perfectly fulfilled in the best of his songs and ballads.

At the same time, they opened the way for him to equally enduring perfection of form in the instrumental department of music, so that he was enabled to create works of monumental importance in that field as well.

When first he learned to labour under the regulating and unifying sway of a definite form, while he subjected his imagination not to the animating influence of his romantic ideals only, but also to the restraining and polishing power of form in the sonata and symphony, he also learned to give an authentic picture of a distinct feature of romantic life. We found that his symphonies, particularly those in C major and B flat major, were not only more fully pervaded with the spirit of that life than any but the most beautiful and brilliant products of his earlier period, but that they were also so correct in form, that it was only requisite to consider and analyze this formal shape, in order to grasp the meaning perfectly. The E flat major symphony showed an advance, in so far as the composer again applied himself more closely to the actual world; that world being viewed in the dazzling sheen of romantic light, and a new way to develop the symphony still farther being thus discovered.

His chamber music also may be considered from a very similar point of view. The E flat major quintette, E flat major quartette, trios for pianoforte, violin, and violoncello, and the sonatas for piano and violin, contain a long list of important features of his romantically illumined subjectivity, clothed in a thoroughly objective and universally intelligible form, so that they too will retain permanent value through all the transformations and expansions which the development of art may yet undergo.

Schumann failed to achieve equal perfection in the dramatic field, only because he was not equally prepared to submit to the requirements of dramatic form. Even



his greatest work of the kind, "Paradise and the Peri," cannot be regarded as wholly good; the idea of dramatic form being frequently sacrificed to subjective caprice. In parts of the music to Byron's "Manfred," this defect is even more marked; and in the opera of "Genoveva" it utterly destroys all *dramatic* development. The development is *psychologic* only, there is scarcely a hint at anything *dramatic*.

Herewith, however, we approach more closely to the other side of Schumann's significance and rank. He does not increase it by these works, he merely stimulates the farther progress of his whole school.

Before turning to examine this fresh point of view, we must again recall the fact that we have already acknowledged the overtures to these dramatic works, as well as the piano concerto, and a number of other piano works of this period, to be perfect in form, affirming that they, too, will afford artistic enjoyment to future generations, and will testify to the emotions and artistic ideals prevalent in our day.

The number of Schumann's monumental works is relatively small, but such as they are, they are worthy to be ranked with the best work ever done. We may not agree with the ideals embodied in them; we may rank the work of Bach, Handel, Beethoven, or other renowned masters higher than these; but we are forced to acknowledge that their structure is artistic, and this is always the last and highest condition of the artistic value of a composition.

The preceding remarks will suffice to make Schumann's great value in the general development of art evident.

With the products of his earliest artistic labours he introduced into music, not new objects only, but also adequate and appropriate forms in which these objects might be presented. By untiring struggle and toil he fertilized

his imagination, and made it bring forth even more novel and glorious pictures; he produced an endless succession of mental and moral treasures from the most secret repository of his soul, and with untiring labour sought to grasp the innermost organism of his illustrative material in order to give those treasures sonorous form. When he had succeeded in this undertaking in individual works, he then tried to renew and pervade the old forms also with the new spirit. He thus created his ripest work, which not only enriched the art treasures of the nation, but also showed how the tendency revealed in Beethoven's latest work might be continued to the true promotion of art.

*He thereby proved that it can never be the object of art to extend and ever more sharply subtilize lyric expression until it becomes vague; its object must rather be to blend with the larger forms, the larger wealth of lyric illustrative material won in this way.*

We saw that he himself assiduously practised the strict contrapuntal forms, infusing them, too, with the new meaning, as he succeeded in doing to perfection in instrumental works of this nature. His vocal works were still too deeply rooted in the new school, which relies too exclusively upon the declamation of the text. We decided that only those themes which are sung, not those which are baldly recited, are appropriate to the polyphonic vocal style. The theme must make the meaning entirely clear, even should the words be omitted, thus only does it admit of treatment in the vocal polyphonic sense. Schumann is too heedless of this view. He declaims his theme in the self-same fashion as his song; it is therefore hard to work out the theme, nor can it be worked out into such powerful compositions as the "Mass" and "Requiem" particularly demand. In both works, therefore, we get no more than a hint of the way in which the appliances of the new school

may be adapted to sacred music. It remains for future artists to carry out the task in the given direction. They will not be forced to fit their themes literally to their text, but only to an idea born of the same conception; and, therefore, the more broadly and sonorously they can grasp that idea, the easier it will be to continue its construction, with the help of the appliances of the new school. If these appliances be used in the service of the highest and holiest ideas, then a fresh portrayal of religious feeling in genuinely religious sacred music will and must be found.

As yet, Schumann's immediate successors do not seem to have viewed their task in this light.

Hitherto, they have not kindled their imagination at the light of his spirit, but have rather tried to assimilate and enlarge his technique, which, however, in Schumann, we have found justified from mere subjective considerations much more often than by any special significance. The fullness and open position of the chords, the free introduction of dissonances, particularly of the secondary chords of the seventh, the chords of the ninth and of the so-called eleventh chord, intricate and arabesque-like figuration, syncopation and rich harmony, these characteristic marks of Schumann's style, appear in the works of his followers more arbitrarily than they ever do in his own compositions. With him, as we have repeatedly affirmed, they only serve to give greater individuality to the style, which is otherwise a wholly natural growth. In his ripest work, he used his exhaustive knowledge of harmony merely to give richer shape to the natural harmonic structural process, underlying all forms, these also being made more abundant thereby, and becoming the heralds of his romantically agitated soul. He generally made free use of dissonances in order to spread a romantic veil of chaste reserve over the phrase, while the syncopation and wondrously woven figuration, assist



the passionately excited, strongly animated language. But still they are all mere details, meant to illustrate and give characteristic form to the phrase, which is itself expressly set forth in the moving manner of the older masters. Inasmuch as his successors neglect to do the same, his style, in their hands, becomes dry and destitute of charm. It is not inspired and postulated by so vivid a meaning as in the master's writings, but it is the product of cold abstraction. Here that barren reflection is at work which refers to outward technics only, and the result is an artificial growth destitute of inward life.

Schumann can stimulate the farther development of art through his mature work only, not through that in which he was still seeking after the new technics, nor through that in which he sported with those technics. As in that mature work, it was his constant effort to reconcile the new methods which he had acquired to the larger forms, so too must it be that of any school which endeavours to carry out his intentions. Such a school must not search for new forms only, but must strive to rejuvenate and remodel the old forms. Constructed in accordance with permanent laws, symphony and sonata, opera and oratorio, will thus receive a larger, broader mould, and at the same time be filled with greater personal truth. Such a school must also be mindful to lead the work of art back again from the romantic to the actual world, as the master himself did in the E flat major symphony. Such a school will be able to contemplate that actual world in the light of romantic transfiguration, and thus to bring the opera also to new bloom, especially if it understand how to personify the rich lyric expression won through Schumann, and thus to make it practicable for dramatic forms.

The "Song" and the "Phantasiestück," the forms of polished, subjective expression, were carried to such a

pitch of perfection by Schumann himself, that little is left for his followers to do. They may still farther improve these forms also, but can scarcely alter or enlarge them. These forms also offer ample room for the development of individual life within the limits fixed by Schumann; but this task can hardly be accomplished by really new creation or transformation, without an injury to the form firmly established in accordance with enduring and immutable laws. This we must learn from Schumann's own experience. Wherever, in his latest cognate works, he attempts to remould these forms, he loses them so completely that we are even less able to recognize them than we were in those earliest compositions where he was still struggling to find them. The limits of these forms are much too narrow to leave room for farther experiments; they will only admit of richer and fuller individual inspiration, as in the best works of Schumann and of kindred masters.

This school may, on the contrary, still find a broad field for action in completing and enlarging the objective forms of the sonata and of chamber music, as also the forms of orchestral and dramatic music. Here Schumann has so distinctly traced out the farther growth, that his disciples, working in his spirit, may yet achieve great things, if, like the master in his ripe work, they grasp their task firmly and enter upon its solution with energy. His disciples must hold fast to the organism of the sonata and its kindred forms, as their master did, conceiving it more profoundly only, that it may become the interpreter of the new ideas; they must know the nature of contrast, the mutual relations of the various parts, and the harmonic, rhythmic, and melodic construction, using them as he did, not arbitrarily, but in the spirit of the form and in the sense of the idea. If then, they succeed in raising the

adagio from the sphere of the song or of the phantasiestück in which it chiefly moved with Schumann into the higher sphere of the hymn ; if they learn to construct an adagio with the rich material of Schumann, but also with the broad conception of Beethoven ; if they can give a more solid setting to the scherzo, and make the allegro movement more precise and still more impressive than Schumann did, in harmony with the scherzo ; then these forms will burst into new and glorious bloom, and the school, like its master, will gain fresh significance in the history of culture and of art.

The results will, of course, be even more marked in the domain of dramatic music.

If this school is to fix the share to be taken by music in dramatic representation, if it is to reveal the universal spiritual life, outwardly portrayed in the drama, then that tendency in music which makes this revelation of the soul its chief object, must naturally be able also essentially to advance dramatic music. Music first makes possible the fullest psychological truth of character-drawing upon which dramatic effect mainly rests. When it allows us an actual sight of the secret laboratories of the spirit, even of the one where all the invisible threads of universal action meet in a common centre, then this first becomes clear to us in its entire range, then we first gain a direct conviction of its necessity. It can take no part in the movement of thoughts and ideas, or in the actual motives and issue of the conflict, but sustains both and lets us feel their conditions, so that we not only understand, but vividly see for ourselves their necessity, just as if we were ourselves engaged in it. Herein lies the essential value of dramatic music. Like lyric music, it brings to the front the innermost life, but—and this is the point which Schumann misunderstood—not in an arranged tableau of lyric outbursts,



which isolate and divide the emotion from mankind in general; but rather as a condensed totality. Only when personified, does the lyric become dramatic. When it transcends its unrighteous assurance, and brings all those isolated emotions which it seeks to establish as individual into mutual relation as unified, organic features of life capable of self-development, it will assume a character which has some reference to the outside world, and which is forced into action. The character-drawing upon which faith in the reality of the circumstances depends, is essentially helped by music; but only when the separate notes of feeling are combined, as there into a characteristic type, so here into fixed musical forms, such as a recitative, aria, scena or ensemble movement. In the ensemble movement especially, opera possesses an instrument for the maintenance of the conflict, such as is unknown to spoken drama. But Schumann usually overlooked this fact, notably so in his opera of "Genoveva."

In this opera, it was the decorative element that particularly attracted him. This element is, of course, essential, but still it is of secondary importance in an opera.

The drama must first acquaint us with the soil on which it grew. Decoration and costume transport us to the date of the action, and also set before us the scene of its occurrence.

Music may also take part in this representation of time and place, in its own style, of course: not objectively, but by its poetic effect upon the mind. So soon as the period taken as its hypothesis by the drama assumes a distinct and concise shape, it finds far more pregnant expression in music than in costume and decoration. We have already shown the excellent illustrative material which the new school provided for the solution of this same problem of dramatic music, and have described the skill with which Schumann used it in his "Genoveva."

But this is still a wholly external view of dramatic music. The chief problem still remains to support the psychological development of the drama.

The subject of the opera of "Genoveva" offered very little opportunity to do this. There is therefore pressing need for Schumann's apostles, and particularly for all those who have an ardent desire to help in farther unfolding the musical drama, to choose their subjects with greater care than he did. The world of the marvellous affords more favourable material for opera than it does for the spoken drama; because music, a thing as intangible as that wonder-world itself, can reproduce its fantastic life with such irresistible force, that we overlook the artistic mechanism, and imagine ourselves moving in a world of reality. But even for music, it is a noble task to aid in the revelation of some genuine ethical value, or to support the dramatic action by a representation of psychologic processes. Thus only can the rich apparatus which the new school has provided for dramatic music attain any adequate application. Coming ages must inevitably turn away from subjects which relate to romantic hobgoblins merely: they must revert to the world, refulgent with romance, whose motive power is formed by the passions and emotions for which Schumann found such striking means of expression, the world where the operas of Mozart and Beethoven had their origin. But this entails a return to those masters. The new opera must accept all the formalism established by those two great masters of musical drama, but must so transform it in the spirit and with the apparatus of the new school, as the composers of earlier days did the song and the various instrumental forms. An aria based as entirely upon the song of the new school, as it once was upon that of the old school, will gain a correspondingly heightened dramatic power, and if it be

expanded into a "scena" in the style of Beethoven, or continued into an "ensemble movement," in which the action is concentrated, as in Mozart's case, and if chorus and orchestra unite in this impulse, then the dramatic art work of the future will arise, in comparison with which the products of the so-called new German school will seem like crude and inartistic experiments.

Schumann has already triumphantly opened this road to the renewal of dramatic music, in the field of the musical epic with his fine work, "Paradise and the Peri;" still greater perfection may, however, yet be achieved even here, by one who shall work on a larger scale and with broader knowledge, if he succeed in representing the separate incidents of the action in grander and integral pictures. The oratorio demands still more concise and vigorous musical development, as this development must necessarily supply the place of the actual presence of action which is lacking. The domain of legend will still afford rich subject-matter for this form of composition, legendary lore being less fitted for scenic representation. But there must always be some vital human emotion to animate the subject, and to be merely revealed in some mythically constructed world, without acquiring any dominant influence.

Such tasks as these we consider fit work for the school which shall continue the master's work in his spirit and intention, and which shall desire to make his principles of art a glorious reality, his unceasing effort to renew art effectual. The works of Schumann's last period, which we have seldom been able to accept, show that he himself regarded his mission from this standpoint. This is particularly proved by his expansion of the ballad form, although his genius, worn by the fiercest conflict and most laborious work, had lost all ability to recognize the correct tendency. He lived only to strive for an artistic palingenesis, no



longer aiming at artistic construction, and thus he lost the critical attention to detail which formerly led him to such important results. This is still further indicated by his enthusiastic veneration for the poetess Elizabeth Kulmann, and for the young musician, Johannes Brahms. He was impressed in the former by an exuberant flow of sentiment, abounding in phrases; in the latter's works he saw purposes, new, yet still his own, set forth with the awkwardness, rich in intentions, of a gifted young genius. Even in the days of his failing powers he did not lose all capability of ardent and earnest endeavour; may his disciples imitate this feature in their master, and not copy his sometimes whimsical peculiarities only!

We have, finally, to mention his services rendered to art in another direction, which although less intimate, and therefore not so rich in results, are nevertheless requisite to the completion of our portrait of the man.

We have already spoken in detail of his rank as a critic. In this department he neither discovered a new system, nor gave to artistic achievement so novel a basis as he did by his productive work. His criticisms, however, contributed to promote the cause of art to an extraordinary degree, and he unfailingly used the effective weapons of his intellect in the cause of beauty and goodness, fighting with ardent and noble zeal. We might name a number of masters, in whose recognition he took a large share. He can only indirectly be held responsible for the fact that a long list of idle tattlers joined him in his work in this department, and, nominally in his name and in his spirit, produced great confusion of ideas by their ignorance.

He took the actual meaning of a composition as the essential point to be illustrated by his criticism; but only because he took it for granted that the form was self-intelligible. We saw how hard he struggled for perfection

of form, and how sternly he insisted upon it in repeated instances. His ignorant imitators in this field, having only the slightest knowledge either of a cogent meaning or of its formal mould, would, of course, soon come to consider form as a vain delusion, or as a hindrance to the exposition of the meaning; and accordingly the most absurd phraseology soon held high holiday. His sad end was assuredly scarcely more tragic to the artist Schumann, than would be, could he know of it, the fatality which numbers him among the musicians of the future, and constantly fathers upon him the theories of his disciples. He had but one point in common with the heroes of the music of the future and their followers, and that is, that he, like them, left the old ruts; but with this slight difference, he did it from inward pressure and in the consciousness of a higher mission, while with them the inspiring cause is generally awkwardness or ignorance.

He was, as we have already explained, early cut off from any really practical work. He gave up perforce the virtuoso career to which he meant to devote his life, and his labours in other directions prevented him from entering upon any similar sphere of action. His personality, too, always seemed most unfitted for anything of the kind.

His mental activity being directed exclusively inward, gradually made him so silent that he would sit for hours without uttering a word in the midst of a merry company; the mention of some musical matter alone betrayed the fact that he was not wholly oblivious of those around him. Most frequently he took no part in the general conversation; an occasional question or remark would show that he was busy with his art, that he was composing, or was working up some musical subject in his imagination. His outward bearing seldom in the least betrayed his thoughts

and feelings. Even his face would retain its quiet, fixed expression, although he might be never so deeply agitated inwardly.

The very slow and imperfect nature of his intercourse with others, the few facts which we know in regard to it, sometimes highly comic, sometimes most delightful, naturally prevented it from being of much benefit to his practical work.

It was, of course, almost impossible from the outset that he should ever attain any results worthy of mention, in the rôle of teacher. To be sure, he himself writes to Hiller (April 10, 1845), of one of his pupils: "I have, I think, helped young Ritter<sup>1</sup> somewhat. A decidedly musical nature, but still very far from clear. I don't know whether he will ever do anything very great, or will disappear without a trace." But he may well have deceived himself in this case. Aside from his own peculiarity of character, it is doubtful if he ever thoroughly understood art as school discipline. He himself learned chiefly in other ways than through the schools, and thus the methods of instruction may well have been strange to him. We can far more readily believe that he pursued with his scholars the same course which he had followed; but the self-same individuality as his was requisite to the attainment of any results, and that he could scarcely hope to encounter. His criticism, on the contrary, was most beneficial to artistic effort, as all younger artists testify, who ever had the good fortune to be brought into contact with him. A few words from him were enough to show them wherein the especial weakness of their work consisted. Therefore he always acted as a stimulus and help to those around him, who were usually deeply attached to

<sup>1</sup> Now living in New York.



him. Even in the family circle, tenderly and sincerely as he loved his wife and children, his tongue was not loosed, even they could not make him belie that peculiar trait of his character. This was undoubtedly the cause of his failure to attain greater rank as an orchestral leader.

A talent for conducting must, of course, be developed like any other talent, and Schumann probably had but little opportunity for this. And indeed this sphere of action seems to have been particularly embarrassing to him. It was evident that he used his bâton hesitatingly, not from lack of habit so much as from a certain, perhaps, instinctive sense of aversion. It seemed as if he disliked so defiant and conspicuous a task. To this we may add that lack of any ability to instruct the men in the orchestra, already mentioned. The study of a composition is far more important than even the direction, and he was almost less fitted for this task. He could enter into the works of the most various men and ages with great delicacy and truth, but it was denied to him to make their meaning clear to others by word of mouth, and he therefore often reduced the performers to a state of mild despair by assuring them that he had imagined the work to mean something very different, without enlightening them in the slightest degree, as he supposed he had. In part singing, which he usually conducted seated at the piano, this defect was less apparent than when he was leading an orchestra, as he could indicate a great deal by actual performance on the piano, which he was unable to put into words.

It would not be difficult to show the great and essential change which the previous theory of musical composition underwent in consequence of Schumann's works.

This theory had hitherto chiefly aimed at laying down certain laws, abstracted from the works of one or several

masters, in accordance with which all compositions were to be constructed, and by which all new creations were to be judged and condemned.

We can readily see how natural it was that such a theory should conflict most violently, not with genius only, but with an individuality marked with any degree of sharpness. Schumann dealt this theory sturdy blows, from which it could hardly hope to recover. He showed that a man may be utterly regardless of it, yet may create a composition correct according to nature and to law. He proved, moreover, that a man may offend against the entire formalism dictated by that theory, and still in no way impair the organism of his composition. He grasped the innermost essence of the organism so fully, that he represented it with a clearness to be found only in the best work of the greatest masters (we refer of course to his mature productions), and as he clothed it in the greatest subjective richness and brilliancy, its outlines became even more and more distinct.

From this point particularly, the new theory of the future, including the art work of the future, will assume new shape. This theory will not be determined by a single composition, or a single musician, or a single school, but it will abstract from all the art works of all ages, the eternal laws which govern them, and then show the relation which a century or a school, and finally the separate individuality may bear to them; will show how an exalted meaning may change the different forms constructed according to the same laws, and thus be made manifest.

Above all, this theory will be able to prove by the works of the romanticists, Schubert, Mendelssohn, and Schumann, what things are legitimate and intelligible in the entire artistic construction of a work of art, what things are in accord with eternal laws objectively viewed, and

what things are only subjectively true and conditionally allowable, in its harmonic, rhythmic, or melodic appanage. All three masters have clung to the imperishable organism of the artistic model in their monumental and immortal works, with a loyalty unknown in any but the greatest masters; but they have, at the same time, produced it with such subjective fineness of finish, that both the universal truth and the merely individual truth are clearly revealed. The first task of theory must be to determine this point, disclosing and explaining the organism of the art-work to the coming apostle of art, and then showing him how to animate and recast it in individual style, so that it may become the bearer of a new and significant meaning. Convincing examples well worthy of imitation may be found to illustrate this point in the mature works of Schumann.

If we consider the significance of Schumann in the history of culture somewhat more closely, we shall have to contend against many a contradictory opinion, and to correct many a false conception.

The importance of the arts and of art works in the history of culture is again a double one, inasmuch as from their formal side they cherish and refine the sense of form and the feeling for beauty in the human soul, and at the same time infuse a more or less valuable meaning into this form.

Schumann's merit in either direction has often been doubted, and chiefly by those who are unable to understand his forms, or to appreciate the intrinsic reserve even of his ripest works.

It is far harder to impart a full knowledge of musical forms than of any or all other art forms. Such knowledge depends upon a comparison of their separate parts, and their relations to each other. To become thoroughly fami-



liar with a form, we must study the mode of its construction and the way in which the separate parts are knit together. This is extremely difficult in the case of musical forms, because we are unable to observe them in their integrity through our physical senses. We can study them successively only, and by dissecting them into the minutest particles, each of which is divided from the rest, so that we can compare them together in the moment of enjoyment and contemplation only by the aid of feeling and memory. Neither of these faculties is, however, an entirely infallible judge. The triumphs of architecture, sculpture, and painting are revealed to us quiescent and immutable in their totality, so that we are in a condition to consider them from every side, at any time.

Then too, the laws of their formal construction are far more distinctly marked than is the case with music, and even slight deviations from the laws of form are painfully apparent. Workmanship much admired in music, which passes for artistic in our day, would at once be scouted as a monstrous failure, even by the multitude, were it put into sculpture, painting, or architecture.

Even the scholastic forms of poetry are easier of apprehension, although communicated to the senses in the same way as musical forms. They are usually conditional upon rhythm only, and do not proceed from amplification or diversity as the forms of music do. In poetry, as in music, harmony and melody are co-equal components of the structure, and naturally increase the difficulty of complete knowledge of it. With the lapse of time, therefore, the idea has gradually gained ground that music might dispense with legitimate and permanent form, aye, that such form hinders the pregnant and felicitous development of the melodious art. It is hardly necessary to expose the error of such an idea. Our whole book has gone to prove that

a meaning can only find adequate expression when constructed in accordance with the laws of form, and when it complies with the immutable laws which seem grounded in matter; any other course can lead, at the utmost, to isolated outbursts of emotion, which cannot be considered as worthy to rank with works of art. In Schumann's case particularly, we showed that he reproduced his own individuality with the utmost freedom and nobility in those cases only where he submitted to accept the firmly fixed forms of the song and sonata, and where he began his work under the influence of the idea of those forms, and continued it in close harmony therewith.

We have showed that he was to give his meaning exhaustive musical shape in the *song*, only in so far as he tried to imitate the poetic form, the strophic verse structure, succeeding in reproducing various poet-individualities in music by his peculiar way of doing this. He entered so closely into their words, that his songs may be reckoned as their direct expression, and are also as perfect in form as the best vocal compositions of the greatest masters.

In similar style he holds fast to the original idea in instrumental forms; he grants it such controlling power over his own imagination during the process of creation, that it seems equally embodied with the particular personal idea in the resultant work; but the latter is made barely intelligible by this method. It is to be recognized only by the oddity of the picture, by its deviation from the construction required by the general idea.

From all this it follows that the feeling for the perception of form is not an unerring guide, or one to be recommended. Feeling, be it ever so carefully trained and taught, will always have a dislike of all that is new or unusual, and will often attribute its own inability to grasp an enlarged or organically altered form as such, to some

blemish in the work of art. An ear and feeling trained by Mozart and Haydn alone will find it hard to comprehend the conformity to law of Beethoven's forms; and one accustomed to consider Reichardt's songs as the perfection of form, will find the fuller forms of Schubert and Mendelssohn as perplexing as those of Schumann.

The intellect must assimilate the fundamental laws of formal construction, and reconcile them to feeling, before the formal mould of the multiplicity of art-works in the hundred modifications of which it is capable, can be considered thoroughly, and made acceptable to feeling. If the intellect has grasped the entire formative process of the work of art, it will be easy so to school the feeling also, that it may everywhere and instantly recognize an expansion, violation, or total destruction of a form.

We have thus become convinced that Schumann gradually gained full mastery of form; that he stamped it plainly, and with entire consciousness, upon his ripest work, but at the same time commensurately changed and enlarged the new meaning embodied therein. Nowhere do we find a violation or abandonment of form, so that in this particular his mature work may be unconditionally ranked with the very best productions of the men gifted by God, and it will quite as surely cultivate a national sense of form and beauty.

In the works of his latest period his power of artistic construction vanishes, and as the form becomes uncertain, the pregnant expression of a definite meaning is also lost.

The opposition to Schumann's work, on account of its ethical meaning, is wholly unjustifiable. Subjective likes and dislikes have now an influence in this particular over extrinsic development of art, which cannot be sufficiently combated and lamented.



Music having acquired such vast proportions that it embraces the entire spiritual side of humanity and of the individual, it is natural that certain tendencies of taste should grow up, one of which almost wholly precludes the other. It is perfectly conceivable that a man should choose one master and one school as answering to all his artistic needs, excluding all others from the programme of his heart and home; we would not censure one who, in his admiration for Bach, forgets Händel, a man of equal genius; or rejects Mozart for Haydn, or Haydn for Beethoven; or *vice versa*; we would not blame a man for being delighted and edified by the works of one master which answer exactly to his own individuality, finding no occasion to enlarge his mind by the study of other composers. In modern times, however, men go farther yet; they base their criticism upon these personal relations to the artist and his work, judging and condemning all else accordingly. Because the old Italian school appeals more strongly to one man, he builds his theory upon its works, and must, of course, condemn all farther progress without more ado, as unsuited to this theory. The same thing has occurred with the separate masters, and hence the objective standpoint from which artists, and especially art-work should alone be judged, is utterly lost amidst this purely subjective criticism. A multiplicity of opinions has arisen in regard to even the simplest principles of art, opinions hardly coinciding even in their remotest points. One man considers that form a mere petrefaction, which another considers to be bold and artistically worthy of all admiration; one man is left cold by a composition, which moves another to his very depths; one man holds as the highest work of art, that which another would hardly consent to place in the lowest rank. Thus the impression produced by the work of art is confounded with that work itself, so much so, indeed,

that the latter is no longer reckoned as its own object, but only as the means to the object. The majority of connoisseurs have so completely lost their position in regard to the work of art in recent times, that they regard it as created for them alone, and would fain ignore the existence of everything which is not accessible or agreeable to them.

We will not try just now to contradict this essentially erroneous idea, but simply affirm that a work of art must always be its own excuse for being. Although the artist may meet the requirements and demands of life at the same time that he embodies the idea crying aloud within him for expression, he does not create the work of art for that express purpose; but only because he is driven and impelled by that dominant idea; and by that alone it is to be judged, and not according to subjective caprice.

Even Schumann found himself greatly hampered and hindered by this absurd notion, and in our day there are still many people who despise his works because they consider the matter which they contain *trifling* or *morbid*.

Schumann's true mission was to develop art, and his rank in the development and history of music is proportionate to his fulfilment of that mission. The earliest development of Christian art is assigned to various races. The Netherlands contributed largely to raise it to the first stage by their loyal devotion to the scholastic forms of counterpoint. The Italians then undertook its further cultivation, animating those forms with the charm of a melody full of meaning, and creating, moreover, the first elements of dramatic art. These elements were continued by the French and attained perfection in the hands of the Germans, who then took almost exclusive charge of the general future growth of art. Thenceforth, however, the work was carried on by the individual and pre-eminent spirits of the nation. The history of music became chiefly

a history of musicians. The individual gained an important share in the general development of art, and this new spirit produced the first great works of art in Bach, Händel, and Gluck.

Their individuality was closely connected with the highest and holiest ideas, to which their artistic intuitions were subject, and by which they were governed. Bach and Händel were absorbed in the marvels of the Christian, Gluck in those of the antique, view of life, and thus they created their immortal masterpieces.

With Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, personality was distinctly related to the outside world. Their artistic imagination was stimulated by the wonders of the creation and the power of great historical events, friendly affinities with nature, love, joy, and sorrow, finding form and sound in their genial work. The resultant compositions seem no less great and forcible than those derived from specifically Christian, or antique views of life, but they do seem more free and better suited to the needs of humanity. And the natural result is that the spirit retreats into itself; relies wholly upon itself; elevates itself with all its profound and lofty traits into the object to be illustrated by its artistic effort. It does not, indeed, dispense with outward incitements, but they vanish gradually, leaving little trace in the composition.

Music, the truly introspective art, must necessarily follow in this path, and the mission, therefore, of the three masters who completed it: Schubert, Mendelssohn, and Schumann, is not inferior to that of the other great masters, whose works may, perhaps, impress us more strongly. In listening to Bach's Passion music, Händel's oratorios, Beethoven's symphonies, or Mozart's operas, we may, indeed, feel with astonished admiration, all the greatness of their authors, but it would be inartistic and unjust to



rank them higher on this account than we do the works of those younger masters, who dealt with the lesser relations of the heart and the imagination, giving us the same artistic image of these that the older masters did of the great events of the world. Art is, in the highest sense of the word, democratic. Anything which fills its place is necessary and important, without any order of rank.

Moreover, that is a strange misconception of artistic objects which underrates the treasures of the heart revealed by the peculiar spontaneous action of the mind, as in the above instances. The isolated subject is more valuable, only in so far as it benefits the whole body, and in Schumann we have found features of subjective value only, which must needs decay and disappear with time; but side by side therewith we have found a very large portion of spiritual life, from which the old and glorious work of art cannot fail to imbibe fresh vigour. We have seen that he himself laboured unceasingly to accomplish this work of rejuvenation; many of his works unmistakably betray the beginning of the change, and he himself plainly and unequivocally showed his disciples how they might complete it. Even in comparison with the greatest works of all ages, a meaning cannot seem insignificant, which as we have shewn, will yet revive and restore opera, oratorio, the great orchestral forms, ay, even the forms of religious vocal music.

To master this meaning thoroughly, a man must, indeed, give himself up to it entirely, turning away from all which is only subjectively true and therefore perishable, and from all which is purely accidental and not an essential element of Schumann's individuality. But as the master sometimes failed to get true insight even from this standpoint, the disciple who would be inspired with his spirit must seek it patiently.

His art work, as well as the meaning therein revealed, and the whole new school of art evolution which he founded, has been called *diseased*; doubtless particularly because it generally took the night side of human emotion as the object of its artistic illustration, but largely also because it does this in the most polished mode of expression.

Those who think nothing healthy unless it be rough and rude, must of course consider Schumann's tendency a sickly one. But tender emotion may be sound to the core, however refined it may seem, while, on the other hand, the apparently robust superficial expression of feeling is often nothing more than morbid sentimentality.

The extravagance called so healthy in our noble and common rhymesters, is, with scarcely an exception, only perverse sentimentality; only the expression, inartistic at best, of an enervated and distorted feeling; an extravagant and debased sentiment, in comparison with which the sentiment often encountered in Schubert, and so willingly illustrated by Schumann, is truly refreshing and inspiring. The one is exhausting and enervating in its effect, because it depends upon meaningless phrases, the other, on the contrary, frequently avails to stimulate and to fertilize, because it strikes chords in the human breast, which, hushed by the bustle and clamour of the day, often spread a poetic aroma over the entire individuality of the recipient, giving a far higher value to his being, a more lasting power to his work, and ennobling his personality in every direction.

Subtilized and refined as the emotion may be which is expressed in the "Kinderscenen" and "Phantasiestücke," or in the "Variations" and other similar works, it has never yet seemed to us morbid, and in the greater works of his ripest years we recognize features of a life which is richly romantic indeed, but which pulsates with perfect health.

The fact that he took the "sick heart" as the object of

his illustration, is also true of the greatest leaders in poetry and music. Our poets and musicians have chosen the most moving episodes in the history of the sorrowful heart, as the subject of their best work, when they had the skill to paint those episodes in all their tragic force, but also with a little human sympathy and charity. Schumann may not always have succeeded in showing the latter qualities, for it is very hard for a musician to do so, when he feels that tragic power as deeply, intensely, and overwhelmingly as Schumann did. And thus it came to be his own tragic fate.

In writing songs, he was usually able to give a picture shading off to mildness, even of the often morbid and over-irritated emotion of Heine. He was wonderfully successful in giving a sympathetic picture of tragic conflict, in instrumental form, in the "Manfred overture," while the "Kreisleriana" seem to prophesy that gloomy period when he was utterly routed, when the sick heart and the diseased imagination became the hopeless prey of tragic destiny.

Thus Schumann seems to be an essential link in the history of the general development both of culture and of art. He gave to musical composition a more distinct bias, which is an indispensable condition for the development of the art; he enriched the artistic treasure of the nation by a series of finished art works which will retain enduring value in all ages, and in them he established a meaning which must not only give new vigour to art, but which has added and will continue to add new and fecundating elements to the collective life of the nation.

*The highest and the only mission of the artist is to create a meaning valid for all ages, a meaning which shall inspire the life of the nation with more and more glorious aspiration, and whose formal mould shall also contribute, as the master himself said, to make beauty practical.*





## A P P E N D I X.

### ROBERT SCHUMANN'S PRINTED COMPOSITIONS.

PREPARED FROM HIS OWN LIST AS USED BY

WASIELEWSKI, AND FROM INFORMATION GATHERED FROM  
OTHER SOURCES.

1829.

No. 1, 3, 4, 6, and 8 of the "PAPILLONS" (Op. 2).

1830.

VARIATIONS on the name Abegg (printed in 1832 as  
Op. 1).

1831.

Remaining numbers of the "PAPILLONS."  
ALLEGRO for Pianoforte (Op. 8).

1832.

INTERMEZZI *per il Pianoforte* (Op. 4).

PIANO STUDIES arranged from Paganini's Caprices  
(Op. 3), Part 1.

IMPROMPTU, SCHERZINO, BURLA, LARGHETTO, and  
WALTZES (from the Albumblätter, printed as Op. 124.  
No. I., III., XII., XIII., XV.).

1833.

ETUDES *de Concert d'après des Caprices de Paganini* (Op. 10), Part 2.

IMPROMPTUS on a theme, by Clara Wieck (Op. 5).

TOCCATA for piano (Op. 7) (first written in 1830, but entirely revised in 1833).

1834.

ETUDES SYMPHONIQUES (*en forme de variations*, Op. 13).

CARNIVAL. *Scènes mignonnes sur 4 notes* (Op. 9), begun.

1835.

*Carnival* finished,

GRANDE SONATE *pour le pianoforte*, No. 1 (Op. 11), F. sharp minor.

PIANO SONATA, No. 2 (Op. 22), in G minor; both begun in 1833. The last movement of the second sonata not written till the end of 1838.

No. II., LEIDES-AHNUNG; IV., WALTZES; XI., Romanze; XVII., ELEVEN of the Albumblätter (Op. 124).

1836.

FANTASIE for piano (Op. 17).

CONCERT SANS ORCHESTRE (Grande Sonate 3, Op. 14), F. minor.

No. V., Phantasietanz; VII., Ländler, from Albumblätter (Op. 224); and No. 6 from Bunte Blätter (Op. 99).

1837.

PHANTASIESTÜCKE for piano (Op. 12).

THE DAVIDSBÜNDLER. Eighteen character pieces for piano (Op. 6).

No. VIII., Lied ohne Ende (from Op. 124).



## 1838.

- KINDERSCENEN. Easy pieces for the piano (Op. 15).  
 KREISLERIANA. Fantasies for piano (Op. 16).  
 NOVELLETTEN for piano (Op. 21).  
 SCHERZO, GIGUE and ROMANZE (from Op. 32).  
 FINALE to Sonata (Op. 22),  
 No. IX., IMPROMPTU ; X., WALTZES ; XIV., VISION ;  
 XVIII., BOTSCHAFT (from Op. 124).  
 No. 2, 5, 7, 8 and 9 (from Op. 99).

## 1839.

- ARABESQUE for piano (Op. 18).  
 BLUMENSTÜCK for piano (Op. 19).  
 HUMORESQUE for piano (Op. 20).  
 NACHTSTÜCKE for piano (Op. 23).  
 FASCHINGSSCHWANK (Op. 26).  
 No. XIX., Phantasiestücke from Op. 124, and No. 1,  
 "Drei Stücklein," and 10, "Praeludium" (from Op. 99).  
 FUGHETTO in G minor (in Op. 32).  
 THREE ROMANCES for piano (Op. 28).

## 1840.

- SONG CYCLE, from H. Heine (Op. 24).  
 "MYRTHEN." Song cycle for voice and piano (Op. 25).  
 THREE POEMS by Geibel, for part singing with piano  
 (Op. 29).  
 THREE POEMS by Geibel, for one voice with piano ac-  
 companiment (Op. 30).  
 THREE BALLADS : "Die Löwenbraut ;" "Die Rothe  
 Hanne ;" "Die Kartenlegerin" (Op. 31).  
 SIX SONGS for four-part male chorus (Op. 33).

FOUR DUETS for soprano and tenor with piano accompaniment (Op. 34).

TWELVE POEMS, by Justinus Kerner. A series of songs for one voice with piano accompaniment (Op. 35).

SIX POEMS, by R. Reinick, for one voice with piano accompaniment (Op. 36).

TWELVE POEMS from Rückert's "Liebesfrühling," for voice and piano (Op. 37). No. 2, 4, and 11 composed by Clara Schumann.

"Liederkreis." Twelve Songs by J. von Eichendorff, for one voice with piano accompaniment (Op. 39).

FIVE SONGS for voice and piano (Op. 40).

FRAUENLIEBE UND LEBEN. Song cycle by A. von Chamisso, for voice with piano accompaniment (Op. 42).

ROMANCES AND BALLADS for voice with piano accompaniment (Part I., Op. 45; Part II., Op. 49; Part III., Op. 53).

THREE TWO-PART SONGS with piano accompaniment (Op. 43).

DICHTERLIEBE. Song cycle from the "Book of Songs," by H. Heine (Op. 48).

"BELSHAZZAR." Ballad by H. Heine, for voice with piano accompaniment (Op. 57).

### 1841.

FIRST SYMPHONY (Op. 38, B flat).

OVERTURE, SCHERZO, and FINALE for full orchestra (Op. 52, E major; the finale rewritten in 1845).

SYMPHONY in D minor (Op. 120; rewritten in 1851).

ALLEGRO for piano and orchestra (used as first movement to Piano Concerto, Op. 54).

TRAGEDY by H. Heine (published in Op. 64). Song. No. 4, 12, Abendmusik; 13, Scherzo from Op. 99, and No. XVI., Schlummerlied from Op. 124.

## 1842.

THREE QUARTETS for two violins, viola, and violoncello (Op. 41). A minor, F and A.

QUINTET for piano, two violins, viola, and violoncello (Op. 44). E flat.

QUARTET for piano, violin, viola, and violoncello (Op. 47). E flat.

PHANTASIESTÜCKE for piano, violin, and violoncello (Op. 88).

## 1843.

ANDANTE AND VARIATIONS for two pianos (Op. 46).

"PARADISE AND THE PERI" for solos, chorus, and orchestra (Op. 50).

No. 11, MARCH from Op. 99 and VI.; Wiegenliedchen from Op. 124.

## 1844.

EPILOGUE TO GOETHE'S FAUST for solos, chorus, and orchestra.

## 1845.

FOUR FUGUES for piano (Op. 72).

STUDIES for pedal piano (Op. 56).

SIX FUGUES on the name of Bach, for organ (Op. 60).

SKETCHES for pedal piano (Op. 58).

INTERMEZZO, RONDO, and FINALE to "Fantasie" (published as Concerto, Op. 54).

No. XX. Canon from Op. 124.

## 1846.

SYMPHONY in C major (Op. 61).

FIVE SONGS by R. Burns for mixed chorus (Op. 55).

FOUR SONGS for mixed chorus (Op. 59).



## 1847.

TWO SONGS by Mörike for one voice with piano accompaniment (Op. 64).

OVERTURE TO "GENOVEVA" (Op. 81).

FINAL CHORUS: "Das Ewig-Weibliche zieht uns an," from Faust.

TRIO for piano, violin, and violoncello (Op. 63, in D minor).

SONG, "Zum Abschied," for chorus and wind instruments (Op. 84).

TRIO for piano, violin, and violoncello (Op. 80, in F major).

RITORNELLA by Fr. Rückert, for four-part male chorus (Op. 65).

THREE SONGS for male chorus (Op. 62).

FIRST ACT OF GENOVEVA, complete sketch.

## 1848.

The Opera GENOVEVA, finished (Op. 81).

CHORUS FROM FAUST: "Gerettet ist das edle Glied."

WEIHNACHTS-ALBUM (album for the young, Op. 68).

MUSIC TO MANFRED, BY BYRON (Op. 115).

ADVENT SONG, by Rückert, for solos, chorus, and orchestra (Op. 71).

BILDERAUS OSTEN. Six impromptus for piano, for four hands (Op. 66).

FIVE PIANO PIECES (published in Op. 82, "Waldscenen").

## 1849.

FOUR TWO-HANDED PIANO PIECES (Op. 82, "Waldscenen").

PHANTASIESTÜCKE for clarinet and piano (Op. 73).

ADAGIO and ALLEGRO for horn and piano (Op. 70).

CONCERTSTÜCK for four horns and orchestra (Op. 86).

BALLADS AND ROMANCES for chorus (Part I., Op. 67, Part II., Op. 75, Part III., Op. 145, Part IV., Op. 146).

ROMANCES for female chorus (Part I., Op. 69, Part II., Op. 91).

SPANISH LIEDERSPIEL for soprano, alto, tenor, and bass, with piano accompaniment (Op. 74).

FIVE EASY PIECES in popular style for violoncello, with piano accompaniment (Op. 102).

LIEDER-ALBUM for the young (Op. 79).

JAGDLIEDER. Five songs for four-part male chorus (with accompaniment of four horns ad libitum, Op. 137).

MOTET. "Verzweifle nicht" for double male chorus (Op. 93).

MINNESPIEL, from Rückert's Liebesfrühling (Op. 101).

FOUR MARCHES for the piano (Op. 76).

QUICK MARCH (No. 14, in Op. 99).

LYRICS AND SONGS from "Wilhelm Meister," and "REQUIEM for Mignon" (Op. 98), for chorus.

SCENE IN CATHEDRAL and in the Garden; scene of Ariel and Faust's awakening, from "Faust."

FOUR DUETS for soprano and tenor with piano (Op. 78).

TWELVE PIANO PIECES FOR FOUR HANDS (Op. 85).

INTRODUCTION and ALLEGRO for piano and orchestra (Op. 92).

FOUR DOUBLE CHORUSES for large choral unions (Op. 141).

NACHTLIED, by Hebbel, for chorus and orchestra (Op. 108).

SPANISH LOVE SONGS (Op. 138).

THREE SONGS from Byron's Hebrew melodies, for one voice with harp or piano accompaniment (Op. 95).

THREE ROMANCES for oboe and piano (Op. 94).

“SCHÖN HEDWIG.” Ballad by Hebbel, for declamation with piano accompaniment (Op. 106).

## 1850.

“NEW YEAR’S SONG,” by Rückert, for chorus and orchestra (Op. 144).

THREE SONGS for voice and piano (Op. 83).

SONGS, published in Op. 77, 96, and 127.

SIX SONGS, by Wilfried von der Neun (Op. 89).

SIX POEMS by Lenau, and Requiem (Op. 90).

SCENES FROM FAUST. “The four gray women,” and “Faust’s Death.”

CONCERTSTÜCK for violoncello and orchestra (Op. 129).

THIRD OR RHENISH SYMPHONY in E flat (Op. 97).

OVERTURE TO SCHILLER’S “BRIDE OF MESSINA” (Op. 100).

## 1851.

FOUR SONGS for soprano with piano (Op. 107, No. 1, 2, 3, 6).

OVERTURE TO SHAKESPEARE’S JULIUS CÆSAR (Op. 128).

“Märchenbilder.” Four pieces for piano and viola (Op. 113).

FOUR HUSSAR SONGS by Lenau (Op. 117).

“THE PILGRIMAGE OF THE ROSE.” Fairy tale taken from a poem by Moritz Horn, for solos, chorus, and orchestra (Op. 112).

“THE KING’S SON.” Ballad by Uhland for solos, chorus, and orchestra (Op. 116).

MÄDCHENLIEDER by Elizabeth Kulmann, for two soprano voices and piano (Op. 103).

SEVEN SONGS by E. Kulmann, for voice and piano (Op. 104).

BALL SCENES. Pianoforte duet (Op. 109).



FIVE HEITERE GĒSANGE (Op. 125).

THREE PHANTASIESTÜCKE for piano (Op. 111).

SONATA for piano and violin (A minor, Op. 105).

SONGS, by Pfarrius, for voice and piano (Op. 119).

TRIO for piano, violin, and violoncello (Op. 110, G minor).

SONATA for piano and violin (D minor, Op. 121).

OVERTURE TO GOETHE'S HERMAN AND DOROTHEA (Op. 136).

## 1852.

"THE MINSTREL'S CURSE." Ballad by Uhland, revised by R. Pohl, for solo voices, chorus, and orchestra (Op. 139).

MASS for four-part chorus, with orchestral accompaniment (Op. 147).

REQUIEM for four-part chorus and orchestra (Op. 148).

"VOM PAGEN UND DER KÖNIGSTOCHTER." Four ballads by E. Geibel, for solo voices, chorus, and orchestra (Op. 140).

FIVE POEMS of Queen Mary Stuart, for mezzosoprano and piano (Op. 135).

TWO SONGS (No. 4, 5; Op. 107).

FOUR SONGS for one voice (Op. 142).

## 1853.

"THE LUCK OF EDENHALL." Ballad by Ludwig Uhland, revised by Hasenclever, for male voices, solos, and chorus; with orchestral accompaniment (Op. 143).

FESTIVAL OVERTURE, with song on the theme of the "Rhine Wine Song," for orchestra and chorus (Op. 123).

SEVEN PIANO PIECES IN FUGHETTO FORM (Op. 126).

THREE PIANO SONATAS for the young (Op. 118).

OVERTURE TO "FAUST."

CONCERT-ALLEGRO with Introduction, for piano and orchestra (Op. 134).

FANTASIE for violin with orchestral accompaniment (Op. 131).

BALLAD, "VOM HAIDEKNABE" (Hebbel), and "The Fugitives" (Shelley), for declamation with piano accompaniment (Op. 122).

KINDERBALL. Six easy dance tunes for four hands (Op. 130).

To Schumann's last period of creative industry we also owe the following compositions, omitted from the above list:—

"MÄRCHENERZÄHLUNGEN." Four pieces for clarinet, viola, and piano (Op. 132), probably written in 1853.

"GESÄNGE DER FRÜH." Five pieces for the piano (Op. 133), and some few unprinted compositions.

In this list Op. 27, Op. 51, Op. 87, and Op. 114 are not mentioned. Op. 27 undoubtedly dates from Schumann's year of song—1840. It contains, among other things, a song printed in the album published in 1842 by R. Hirsch, "My love is like a red, red rose." Another, in the same volume, "Only a smiling glance," was published as a contribution to the "Musical Journal" in December, 1840, and then added to the "Collection of Songs, with Accompaniments (Second Part), arranged by R. Frieze."

Op. 51 is likewise a volume of songs, five in number. No. 3, "Then, why should I roam?" having previously appeared in the third annual series of the "Song Album," published by R. Hirsch (July, 1844); No. 1, "I look into my heart," in the fourth series (January, 1845), and No. 2, "When I to the garden go," in the Mozart Album, published in Brunswick by J. Spehr. The whole volume came out in March, 1850.

Here we may also mention the fact that Schumann also took part in the Rhine Song competition of 1840. His setting of the song, "They shall not have it," was much sung.

Op. 87 is Schiller's ballad of "The Glove," and was probably written with the other ballads between 1849-50. It appeared in January, 1851.

Op. 114 is three songs for three-part female chorus, which were probably composed in the year 1852; they appeared in May, 1853.





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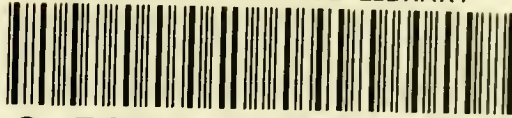


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